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JAPANESE FRAGMENTS.

View of Yedo Bay from the hills over Kanagawa

JAPANESE FRAGMENTS,

WITH FACSIMILES

OF

68376

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ARTISTS OF YEDO.

B1883

BY

CAPTAIN SHERARD OSBORN, C.B.

ROYAL NAVY.

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PREFACE.

ONE of my watch-mates in the first ship I went to sea in was a South-Sea whaling-man, and Old Anderson had a store of quaint yarns and experiences culled from Otaheite and New Zealand, to the tempest-beaten shores of Kerguelen and Kamschatka. There was one key to this store —a gill of unadulterated rum—but it had to be applied gently. If you said, "Anderson, here's some grog; tell us a yarn," the probabilities were that Anderson would consign yarns in general to a very unpleasant place, and be heard grunting and growling, as he edged away from you. But boys are wise as serpents in such matters, and we could tell at a glance when the old man was in the mood. It generally exhibited itself in his holding out a great broad hand, all gnarled, scored, and cracked, like a slab of lava thrown up from some volcano, and almost as hard. "There," he would say, pointing to some mark, which policy immediately induced us to say we recognised, "there, young gentlemen, look at *that!* It's twenty years ago come next July that I cutt'd it down to the bone, taking an extra turn with our line round the bollard when we fastened on to that noted fish—White Peter—on them banks of Brazil;"

and then we knew we were safe. Anderson's adventures in trying to catch that "infernal fish" would while away the watch, whilst the rum coaxed from the stores of our older messmates was richly earned. But one night I got into a terrible scrape with the old sailor. I was well up in geography, because very fond of it, and sometimes on questions involving countries or places beyond the mere haunt of sailors, even the learned Anderson would allow me to correct or instruct him. We were poking along through the trades of the Indian Ocean, and had seen some sperm whale, which enabled us to draw the old man out as to their haunts and habits. "He know'd all about them—hadn't he killed them, and come up the Thames in the old day with many a bonnie cargo of their oil? and hadn't he had many a spree with his share of wages?"—"Oh! tell us about them," we exclaimed. Out came the horny hand, and incontinently he launched into a long and tough whaling yarn. We went to the Sandwich Isles, followed the fish to the equator at one season, and then to Kamschatka; but every now and then I was puzzled by the mention of some land I had never before heard of—where it blew like old boots, and Anderson was ever killing but losing whales off its shores. Again he spoke of the place. "Well, you see, we was off the coast of Bungo, and the fish a-blowing all round us."—"Off where?" I said.—"Bungo," replied Anderson, with some irritation.—"Bungo! Bungo! no such place in the Pacific," I replied, quite proud of my geographical accuracy. "No such place in the Pacific? Perhaps not; but there is in

the South Sea," urged Anderson, "and a blessed windy coast it is too." I burst out laughing, and said, "Come, come, Anderson, depend upon it you are wrong." This was more than he could stand. "I tell ye what it is, young gentleman," growled out the old fisherman, "you are latest from school; but *there is* such a place as Bungo, and your master ought to be ashamed of himself for not having taught you so. But mark me: as sure as my name is Bill Anderson, the day will come when you will find I speak the truth, and all I hopes is, that when you goes to Bungo, your ship will be a weatherly one, for if she ar'n't, I'd not give a bad biscuit for your chance of coming off it." I saw it was no use disputing the point, and used to chuckle over his tales of Bungo, as akin to those of the veracious Sinbad.

Years afterwards, I actually found myself in the frigate Furious off Bungo! There was no mistake about it. There was the highland of Bungo under our lee, and as pretty a gale blowing as ever a certain old party brewed. We all laughed; the master smiled as he reported Bungo, 50 miles N. W.; the midshipmen roared over their calculations of the course and distance to Bungo—and we solemnly entered it into the Admiralty log. It was the southern island of the Japanese empire, and known to our first navigators as that of Bungo or Bongo, after the principal province, and I never think of the pleasant cruise I had there, despite of its storms, without regretting that I should have doubted my honest old shipmate.

It has now been my turn to tell of places and men which

few have heard of, and few have visited; and with the recollection of my doubts of Old Anderson fresh in my mind, I have found much encouragement in being able to illustrate my fragmentary tale of the strange things of Japan with a series of beautiful illustrations, bought during my stay in the city of Yedo. For a time, I could not find a publisher who would produce them in a manner likely to do justice without flattery to the skill of the Japanese artists, but at last the good taste of my friend the Editor of *Once a Week*, together with the enterprise of Messrs. Bradbury and Evans, enabled me to place before the Public of England a series of perfect fac-similes, which throw my humble letter-press, as I would desire, into entirely a secondary position. Fragments of knowledge this little Work only professes to be, and as such I confidently offer it to the readers of our land.

SHERARD OSBORN,
Captain.

London, Nov. 1860.

JAPANESE FRAGMENTS.

A JAPANESE BEAUTY.

One glance at her eye,
And you lose your city;

Another, and you would
Forfeit a kingdom.—*Japanese Verse.*

CHAPTER I.

THE FIRST KNOWLEDGE OF JAPAN BY EUROPEANS—KUBLAI KHAN'S ATTEMPT TO INVADE IT—JAPAN ORIGINALLY SUBJUGATED BY CHINESE COLONISTS—SIN-FUH THE FIRST RULER OF JAPAN—THE THEOCRACY HE ESTABLISHED ENDS 100 YEARS BEFORE KUBLAI KHAN'S INVASION.

A GREAT country, more extensive than the British Isles, a people, more numerous than the population of France, have suddenly been introduced to the comity of the

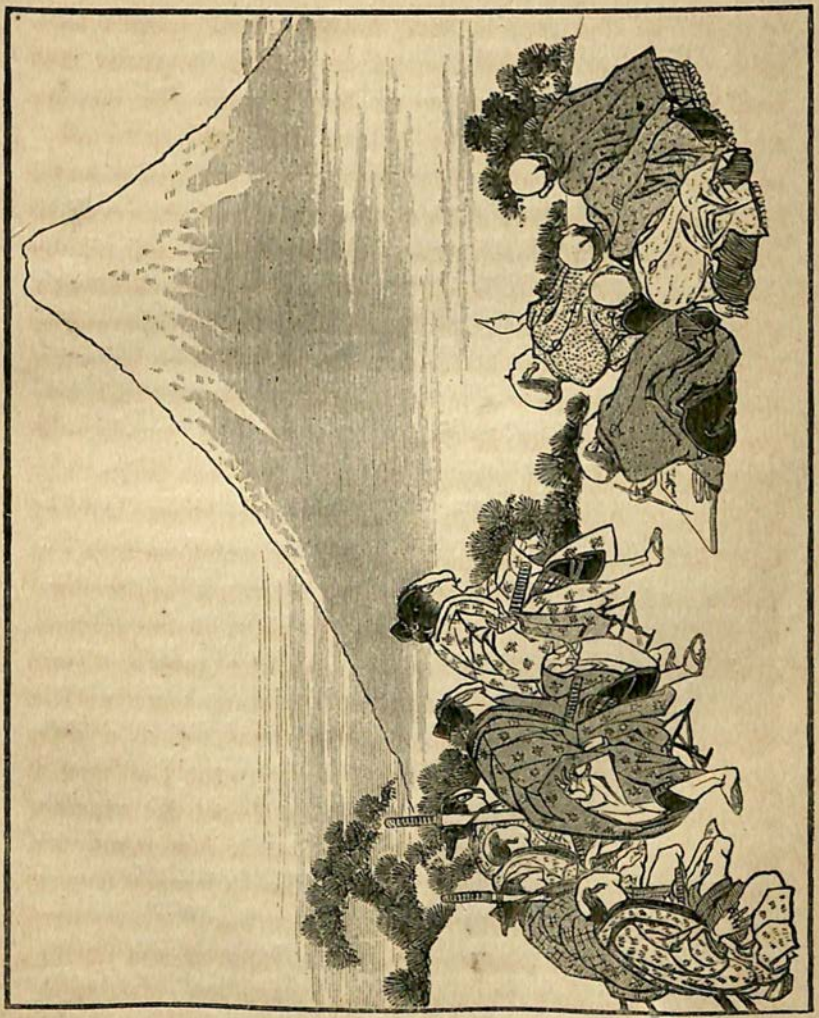
civilised world. The Japanese empire, a closed book of three centuries, is again partially opened. It is but natural that we should long to know all about its history and its social condition, past and present. We rush to cut the leaves and revel in its new wonders. Alas, sirs! it may not be. So many ports for trade, and so many miles round them for recreation, says the Treaty; we must be patient awhile, and go on collecting information in scraps and fragments, fitting one to the other, 'till our knowledge be perfected. Such mites I offer, for it is indeed necessary that we should rub up our knowledge of the people whose ruler has already sent an embassy to report upon European manners and customs; and as the Japanese have for three centuries refused all intercourse with Europe, we are obliged to go back to ancient documents for much of what we wish to know touching that empire, or of the singular and interesting people dwelling within its boundaries.

Comparing that information with the observations and notes made by us and other recent visitors to Japan, we are struck with the strange immutability of many of the characteristics of the people, and of the institutions under which they have lived for three centuries, whilst, unlike the Chinese, the arts and sciences, the manufactures and industrial produce of the country have advanced considerably. My little compilation, a "Cruise in Japanese Waters," which was so favourably received by the public, was written under all the advantages on the one hand of fresh impressions, and on the other hand, amidst the disadvantages of

the multifarious duties of an officer commanding a man-of-war; it was consequently impossible to embody in it all the notes hastily thrown together, or to correct and enlarge upon them from old works that I was well aware existed in abundance, touching the condition of the people and country, at a time when it was unreservedly open to Europeans of all denominations. Here in England, in the noble library of the British Museum, we have a fund of valuable information which may, I believe, be profitably explored, and I bring to that ancient knowledge, modern information, and, what is better still, these native illustrations procured in the city of Yedo itself, which will bring before us in vivid relief the scenery, the towns and villages, the highways and byways of that strange land—the costumes, tastes, and, I might almost say, the feelings of the people—so skilful are Japanese artists in the Hogarth-like talent of transferring to their sketches the characteristics of passing scenes.

It is many centuries since Europe heard of Japan, yet our information of her is still fragmentary. The early traders, like our modern ones, did not willingly impart their knowledge lest it should interfere with large profits. The missionaries of that day, the followers of Ignatius Loyola and St. Francis, looked to little else than the ecclesiastical points involved in their discoveries or progress, and, with rare exceptions, it was not until the Hollander and Englishman commenced to supersede the Portuguese and Spaniard that reliable or valuable information touching the geography, the polity, and social condition of the Japanese Empire began to

be recorded—and then in such forms! Such huge tomes, such ponderous volumes wrapt in quaint language and mouldy learning. One turns in despair from the endless miracles recorded by worthy fathers who lived surrounded by raging heathens and affrighted bonzes, to the wonderful dissertations of worthy John Ogilby, master of the revels to our Charles II. of glorious memory. Worthy Master Ogilby insists upon travelling to and fro between Miaco and Thebes, Yedo and ancient Athens, or Rome. By dint of perseverance we extract his ore and leave his dross, and then clutch sweet Purchas, who startles us by stating, on authority which may not be denied, that in Japan, "where our countryman William Adams doth now reside, and hath been there these many years, therefore hath better means to know than any one," there are two mountains, one of which casteth out flames, and where the Devil may be seen in a bright cloud by such as prepared themselves for the sight by due preparation of mind and body! For a moment we trembled. Could this be our beautiful Fusi-hama, the "Matchless One" of Nipon? Was she like other peerless ones, merely a snare and a delusion, handing her votaries over to the Evil One in a bright and dazzling cloud? *Gracios a Dios!* No; further on we recognised her, for the ancient writer mentioned another mountain, our Fusi-hama, as being "many leagues higher than the clouds." Bother that burning mountain and its unpleasant occupant: we felt so relieved, and turning to our "Hundred Phases of the Matchless Mountain," published in Japan, we rejoiced like the travellers who, in



TRAVELLERS FIRST SIGHTING FUSI-HAMA.

the early morn, halt on the highway, and gaze upon her grand proportions in wonderment and love as she towers above that great empire, and daily blesses the millions at her feet.

But to our tale of Japan, and let us try to carry our reader back to the old, old time, A.D. 1300, when Venice and Genoa were as great as we yet hope they will, one day, again become. It was, then—five centuries and a half ago—that Zipangu, the Chinese barbarism for Nipon, was first heard of in Europe, and that through the narration of the brothers Polo. They had just returned from their wanderings and sojournings in Tartary and China, and men hardly knew what to believe of the marvels they related.

That first news of Nipon was brief, yet admirably calculated to awaken the curiosity and cupidity of races who had for ever been accustomed to look to the remotest East, as a land of wondrous wealth, where gold, precious stones, and almost as precious spices, were as dross. Lands which, if the warlike sons of Western Europe could only reach, their strong arms and stout hearts would enable each impoverished knight and desperate soldier to carve out a kingdom for himself. Marco Polo had not visited Japan, but he had dwelt long in China; he was the first and last European who ever held office under the Chinese government, and it was from the Chinese that he learnt of the great islands to the eastward. "Zipangu!" for so he calls Nipon, "is an island in the eastern sea, very great in size; the people of a white complexion, of gentle behaviour, in religion idolators,

and they have a king of their own. They have gold in great plenty; their king permits no exportation of it, and they who have been to that country—and they are few—report the king's house to be covered with gold (as churches are here with lead), gilded windows, and that they also have many jewels!"

We can imagine the excitement in the stately palaces, and on the marble quays of Venice, when her merchants read this tale, the truth of much of which was subsequently proved; and how they longed that their "talle shippes," "those proud argosies," which had explored the inhospitable coasts of Northern Europe, and penetrated to the further shores of the Cimmerian Bosphorus, should likewise attain and secure for the Queen of the Adriatic the promised wealth of that wondrous Zipangu.

They were not, however, the first to break the Tenth Commandment—to covet that which Providence had given unto others—and Marco Polo relates how his great patron, the conqueror of China, Kublai Khan, had been stimulated to bring the Britain of the Pacific under his paternal sway. Small measure of grace, small persuasion would have fallen to the fair-skinned dwellers in Nipon or Zipangu, could Kublai have reached them with his Tartar hordes. *Dieu merci!* horses may not swim the deep sea, and a small breadth of blue water stayed the charge of the Tartar cut-throat of the olden day, as we trust it may do the *pas accéléré* of the more modern Zouaves or Turcos into our own good land. Kublai Khan proceeded, therefore, to expound certain

philosophical principles to the Wang or King of Nipon, in a communication which would vie, in some respects, with similar documents that we have seen of late years appear from other great potentates who dwell nearer to the meridian of Greenwich. We give it verbatim as a charming exemplification of the ancient fable of the wolf and the lamb.

The "exalted Emperor of the Mongols" from his capital of Cambulu, supposed to be the present Pekin, writes in the year of Grace, 1278, to the Wang or King of Nipon, as follows:—

"I am a prince of a formerly small state to which the adjacent lands have united themselves, and my endeavour is to make inviolable truth and friendship reign among us. What is more, my ancestors have, in virtue of their splendid warrant from Heaven, taken possession of Hia dominions (? China). The number of distant countries and of remote cities that fear our power, and love our virtue, passes computation. Nipon lies near, and has, from the beginning, held intercourse with the central empire. But, during my reign, not a single envoy has appeared to open a friendly intercourse with me. I apprehend that this state of things is not, as yet, well known in your country, wherefore I send envoys with a letter to make you acquainted with my views, and I hope we shall understand each other. Already philosophers desire to see the whole world form one family. But how may this one family principle be carried into effect if friendly intercourse subsist not between us? I am resolved to call this principle into existence, even should I be obliged to do

so by force of arms! It is now the business of the Wang of Nipon to decide what course is most agreeable to him!"

As a specimen of imperial correspondence, in the year of Grace, 1278, we may say that this document is not an uninteresting one, though it failed in convincing the ruler of Japan (then called the Zio-goon) of the advisability of entering into "amity and friendship" with such a ruffian. Kublai proceeded to enforce his arguments, and a mighty fleet put forth from the shores of the wide-spreading Yangstze-keang, to the shallow waters and hardier climes of Pechelee, and the hosts of Tartary sailed for the subjugation of the Isles of the Day-dawn. It was another Armada, and met with the same well-deserved fate. Storms swept the rocky shores of Kiu-siu, the southernmost island of the Japanese group, and by shipwreck, famine, and the sword of the islanders, nearly all that vast force perished.

Yet, in days still more remote, a peaceful conquest of Japan had been effected by the swarming hive of human beings located in the great plain which forms the heart of China. The Chinese dwelling in that rich valley of the Yangstze-keang appear from the earliest ages to have been the prey of their neighbours, or else to have been constantly over-run by fresh inroads from those wide plains of Mongolia whence they derived their origin. Pressed on by the sword of a conqueror, or fleeing from the plague, pestilence, and famine which followed in his path, it was but natural, whilst portions of the Chinese masses fled over the lofty mountain ranges which lie south of the Yangstze, and

so reached the rich provinces which now constitute the tropical portion of that great empire, that another exodus took place from the seaboard, whence the unhappy fugitives took ship and fled eastward across the great ocean, in search of that peace and security which was denied them at home. Chinese and Japanese records happily approximate in their dates of one such exodus; and, taking the latter as our guide, we learn that about 300 years before the advent of the Saviour, there arrived from the "setting sun" (China) a number of beneficent strangers, led by one who combined, like another Moses, the triple office of legislator, high priest, and generalissimo.

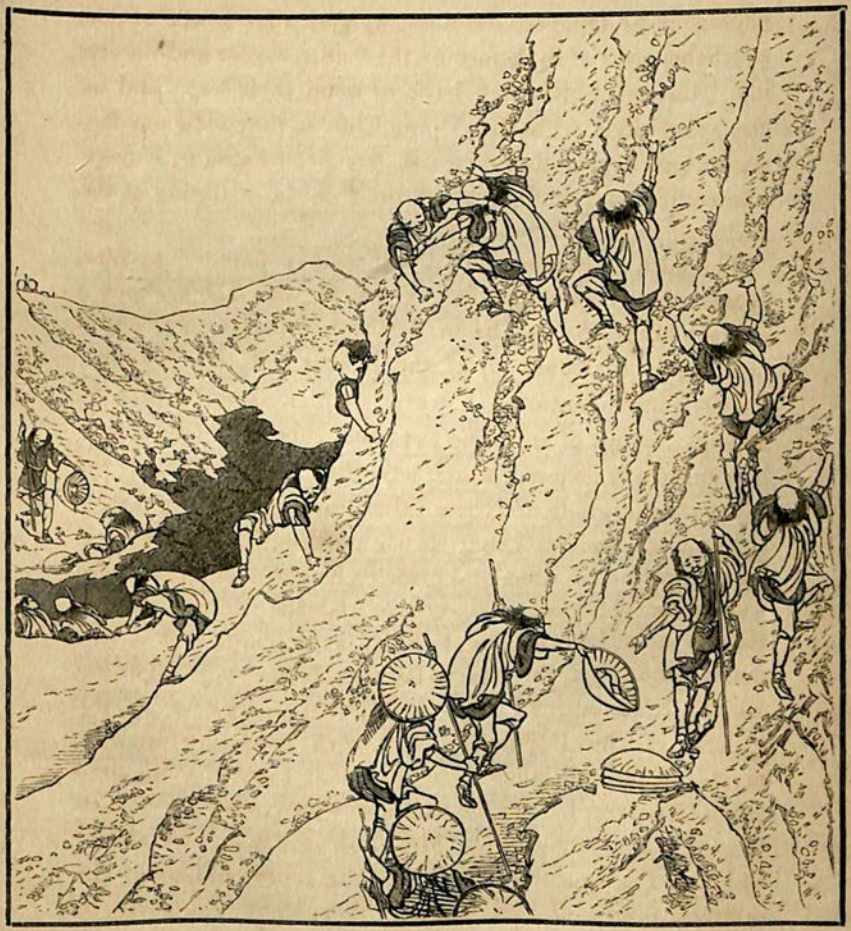
This great leader, Sin-fuh, has since been deified in Japan; but the occasion of his peaceful invasion of that land is otherwise explained by the myth-loving historians of China. They tell, that during the reign of one Hwang-te, 300 couple of young men and women were sent across the eastern sea in search of the waters of immortality; and that these wanderers elected one Sin-fuh as their leader, and, under his skilful guidance, after dire adventures by sea and land, reached the pleasant shores of Nipon—it was their Canaan. It is more than probable that the aboriginal race then found in Kiu-siu and Nipon Islands was of those same Ainos who now dwell in Yesso and the Kurile Islands; and the sword, as well as the milder influence of a superior civilisation, had doubtless much to do with the moulding of the Japanese people and government into what we now find them. From the reign of this warrior-priest, Sin-fuh, date

most of the arts and sciences now existing in Japan, and his rule must have rapidly spread from the southern portion of the present empire as far as the latitude of Yedo; for it is said that, although he *only* lived 150 years, his death took place upon Mount Fusi-hama, which overlooks that capital. That lofty and beautiful peak is the Sinai of the Japanese islander—for Sin-fuh, with great wisdom, and still better taste, did not trust to the grateful memory of his countrymen for a monument to his fame, or to perishable statues of marble and brass, but identified his life and death with the handiwork of the great Creator. If the Japanese records tell truly, their wonderful cone of Fusi-hama was projected upward by volcanic action during the lifetime of Sin-fuh, and the thunders of the Deity might have been possibly enlisted by the Japanese legislator to confirm his authority, as was done in the olden time by the great Israelite at Sinai. Sin-fooism, the ancient faith of the Japanese islander, has its stronghold in that mountain, and in the type of strength, purity, and grandeur which it represents. On its crest is the supposed resting-place of the founder of that faith, and thither have wended the devout of all times in earnest pilgrimage.

Everything in Japan reminds the visitor of this prevailing faith. The love of the people for Fusi-hama in all her phases, and the thousand scenes incident to the yearly pilgrimage to its summit, are the favourite topic of her literati, and the constant subject of her artists' pencils. Amongst other graphic illustrations of the toil and danger

undergone by Japanese devotees, we give a fac-simile of one, which brings vividly before us the "antres vast and deserts idle" through which they have to wend their way; and we can sympathise with the Alpine Club as they view our fac-simile, and regret that no artist has been found in Europe who could as truthfully portray their deeds of daring at the shrine of their mountain goddess.

The faith of Sin-fuh, and the theocracy founded by him, lasted nigh twelve hundred years, to A.D. 1150, about a century before Kublai Khan, desirous of making war for an idea, made an attack upon the liberties of the Japanese. Those twelve centuries, however, were chequered with an average amount of intestine wars and rebellions, and a war-like spirit was fostered, which tended to the extension of the race over the whole of Nipon Island and a portion of Yesso, the original dwellers being thrust northward, or destroyed. In that period of time, and prior to Kublai's attempt, there was evidently frequent intercourse with the Chinese empire, though no acknowledgment of its supremacy, and it was doubtless through the traders between Japan and China that Kublai Khan learnt of the wealth and importance of the "Land of the Day-dawn," and with becoming modesty desired to bring it under his beneficent sway. A hundred years, however, before his attempt was made, the Priest-kings, or Dairi (now called Mikados), of Japan, had almost resigned the executive control to the representative of the military forces of the empire. The first Zio-goon, or executive ruler of Japan, crushed the rebellious spirit of the



PILGRIMS ASCENDING FUSI-HAMA.

great feudal barons, who, of course, under an ecclesiastical sway, had been nigh independent, and he then placed the head of the church in a secondary position, tendering him allegiance, however, and using his ecclesiastical influence for the purposes of the state. Fresh energy had thus been imparted to the ancient empire founded by Sin-fuh, and Japan was in no mood to bow to Kublai Khan.

The storms which sweep the seas of this Eastern Britain, stood Mikado and Zio-goon, priest and soldier, in good stead; and, elated by their first success in resisting the onslaught of the Chinese armies and fleets, they passed an edict, that "Henceforth no Mongol subject should set foot in Nipon under pain of death!" Brave words! of which Kublai Khan tested the sincerity, by rashly despatching an envoy and suite to summon its promulgators to pay tribute; and when the Zio-goon, true to his word, executed them on the seaboard of his kingdom, the indignant conqueror of many realms launched forth another host, to perish as the first had done; and Kublai brought upon all the sea-board of China the curse of a desolating retaliation by Japanese marauders. Through centuries the recollection of those attempts to rob them of their independence sharpened the swords and nerved the arms of the bold pirates from Nipon, and the Chinese trader ceased to traverse the narrow valley of waters which divided the plains of the Yangstze-keang from the rocky iron-bound shores of Zipangu. The traffic between the two countries, and traffic there must have been, now passed entirely into the hands of the Japanese seamen,

whom the Chinese historians quaintly paint as half robbers, half merchants, strongly resembling those early merchant-explorers from whom we, in Great Britain, date our commercial and maritime greatness.

Whilst such was the state of affairs in Japan, the news brought by Marco Polo to Europe was working—a little leaven was leavening the enterprising spirit of Christendom. Cathay and Zipangu were the goal of popes and kings, priests and soldiers; and a real knowledge of the earth's surface was unrolling itself before the genius and cupidity of Europe. Whilst, therefore, Spaniards, Portuguese, Dutch, and English are rapidly struggling towards the land where "the king's house was covered with gold," let us look upon the fair kingdom of Japan.

CHAPTER II.

GEOGRAPHICAL RESEMBLANCE TO THE BRITISH ISLES—FEUDAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT—CHARACTER OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE.

THE English sailor, the English wanderer, in those remote regions where the blue Pacific rolls its vast proportions through frigid and burning climes, may be pardoned for naturally seeking amidst its isles and continents for some resemblance to the pleasant shores of Britain. He hails a country where the oak and pine-tree flourish, where the land is green with herbage, where the field throws forth its flowers, and the wheat will ripen, not scorch, under the glare of a noontide sun. Revelling in the recollection of his home, he loves the new land more, because it resembles the one from which he is an exile. It is this feeling which, in the olden day, when there were new countries for bold seamen to discover, led to the frequent naming of places after the land of the navigator's birth. The Spaniard ever saw a New Spain, a New Grenada, in the regions of the far West; and Dutchmen and Englishmen afterwards dotted the Great South Sea and the Indian Ocean with New Hollands, New Zealands, New Albions, and Caledonias. It is, perhaps,

with somewhat of the same spirit that we would trace a strong similitude in more respects than one between the islands of the British and Japanese empires,—a likeness to be traced in their geographical contour, in their relative position to adjacent continents and seas, in their climates, products, and, to a considerable extent, in the love of independence, combined with order and industry, that actuates their inhabitants. If the reader places a globe before him, he will observe, considering the great mass of land constituting Europe and Asia, as an entire continent, that Britain on the one hand, and Japan upon the other, are detached portions of that great mass, remarkably alike in general outline, and although differing somewhat in latitude, approximate much in climatic condition. The isothermal lines upon meteorological maps attest that fact; and, even as our temperature is modified with respect to Europe by the action of a gulf-stream from the warm regions of the Atlantic Ocean, so in like manner is that of Japan regulated and rendered temperate, as compared with the trying extremes of heat and cold in Northern China, by the beneficent action of a gulf-stream from the tropical portion of the Pacific Ocean. The resemblance may still be traced in the products of Japan and the disposition of her inhabitants. We find her mineral wealth almost in excess of our own. Copper, coal, and iron, she has in almost unlimited quantity; and she yields what we could never boast, much gold and some silver. The vegetable productions are far more varied than those of the British

Isles; and they have within the last few centuries acclimatised the tea-plant and the silkworm. The waters which wash the coast are rich in wealth; indeed, the principal food of the inhabitants, with the exception of rice, are the fish which abound in its numerous bays and fiords.

Bold writers have computed the empire of Japan to comprise about one hundred and sixty thousand square miles of superficial area. Recollecting how indented its shores are with arms of the sea, how its surface is broken up with lofty mountain ranges, and how little we as yet know of either, such an assertion must be considered a mere approximation; but we believe there are far better grounds for stating that the population now verges upon nearly forty million souls. The size of the empire may be in general terms likened to that of the British Isles, if another Ireland were added to them; and to form an idea of how densely the population is packed upon that area, we must suppose the people of the French empire to be inhabiting such a kingdom. The three islands of Nipon, Kiu-siu, and Sikok constitute the real empire over which the Taikoon rules. He claims and exercises a feeble sovereignty over Yesso likewise; but there is every reason to believe that the larger portion of the latter is still in the hands of unsubjugated aborigines. Nipon, the seat of government, and bearing the same relation to the empire that England and Scotland do to the rest of the United Kingdom, is in every respect the most important portion of Japan. In shape it has been compared to a man's jaw-bone; but we think a huge centipede, curving through

Labourers transplanting rice in the rains.

600 miles of latitude and varying from 50 to 200 miles of longitude in width, will bring it better before the reader's imagination. On either side we see its numerous legs represented by capes, promontories, or tongues of land projecting into the sea, and forming an endless succession of noble bays and promising harbours. These projections appear to jut out from the central back-bone of mountains which extend throughout its whole length, and that entire ridge is studded with extinct or dormant volcanoes, peerless amongst which rises sharp into the blue vault of heaven the great mountain of Fusi-hama, which is said to be visible in clear weather throughout the major portion of the island. Besides Nipon there are the islands of Kiu-siu and Sikok, which resembles it much in geographical outline, although from being a little more south their climate and products partake of a more tropical character than those of Nipon.

All these islands are washed on their eastern shores by a great stream of warm water, which, like the gulf-stream of the Atlantic, flows ever to the north-east from equatorial regions. This stream modifies the climate of the Japanese empire to a very great extent; preserves it from the trying extremes to which China in a similar latitude is so sadly subject; but at the same time causes its shores to be swept by tempests in no wise inferior to those which render the seaman's career in our seas a life of danger and of hardship. The difference of temperature between the air and water occasions, during spring and autumn, dense fogs, increasing the perils of navigation as well as in adding still more to the

resemblance between the climates of Nipon and Britain. The entire empire is said to be divided into sixty-eight great provinces, all but five of which are ruled over by feudal princes, who even in our day exercise despotic sway within their borders. They yield allegiance, it is true, to the Taikoon or Emperor, dwelling in Yedo, as well as to the Mikado or Pope dwelling in Miaco; but they have a strong voice in the councils of either, and do not always consider it necessary to comply with new rules or laws emanating from the great temporal or spiritual rulers. This independence and power of the great princes serves as a check upon the despotic powers of the Emperor, though at one time, before the great Taikosama crushed them, their opposition used to be carried to a dangerous and inconvenient extent.

An instance, however, of how limited the imperial power is in some senses, is to be found in the fact, that in recently granting permission to Europeans to trade with the empire, the Taikoon and council could only declare such ports open to us as lay within the imperial domains. And although it appears doubtful whether any of the princes could declare one of their own ports open to foreign commerce without imperial sanction, still we were told that the Taikoon might be resisted by the local authorities if he assumed the initiative upon such a point. The five Imperial or reserved provinces are supposed to support the expenses of the Taikoon and Mikado's courts, but the various princes all contribute in rich presents, which are duly acknowledged by certain complimentary or honorary distinctions.

In strange contradistinction to China, whence many of their laws and ordinances must have been derived, all rank and office in Japan is hereditary, and the old feudal system of Western Europe exists to-day in a well-governed and powerful empire, on exactly the opposite side of the globe. In Japan we have rough, strong-handed justice, without what we should term liberty; but still the people of that country are a vast deal better governed, better protected, the laws better enforced, the public and private reputation of its officers and servants stand far higher, and a much better condition of social and moral polity exists, under the rule of the Taikoon and his princes, than can anywhere be found amongst the court, mandarins, or masses of China. The results of the two systems pursued in China and Japan have brought the former to decay, both politically and morally speaking, and given to the latter stability, prosperity, and a strong government. In both countries the systems have been worked out for centuries; the results are curious, and should be instructive.

In the absence of a representative system to assist the ruler in governing the state, the Taikoon in Yedo can only act through his council, elected from the great feudal princes of the empire and a proportion of a second class of the nobility who hold their powers by rendition of military service to either the Emperor or to the princes. This second class it is which fills all the offices of governors, generals, admirals, and judges throughout the empire; and they thus bring into the Imperial council a vast amount of

practical knowledge as to the general condition and wants of the various portions of the empire. The acts of the Taikoon and council only become lawful when confirmed by the spiritual authority emanating from the Dairi, or council of the Mikado, whilst over all hang the ancient laws and customs as a safeguard to the state and the community at large. The great secret of Japanese government—and, after all, it is that of all good government—is to possess perfect information; and to ensure this they have instituted a system the most extraordinary the world has ever seen, a system of reporting based upon mutual responsibility. Every man is responsible for some one else's good conduct and obedience to the law. Every man, therefore, makes a note of his neighbour's acts, and his neighbour takes notes for a similar reason. We are all very much shocked at such a system, but the people directly interested do not appear to consider it irksome or inconvenient. Indeed, open espionnage, or a system of recording publicly every infringement of the rules of the state, must naturally bring about its own remedy, by people taking very good care not to break those laws and customs. And the transmission of a series of reports to the head information office at Yedo, such reports being counter-checked in all directions, must, in the absence of a public press, parliament, or popular meetings, ensure that the abuse of power by an official, or the wrongs of private individuals, be brought to the notice of the Emperor and council. This system of report and counter-report, together with the careful inculcation of a high tone of

honour amongst a proud nobility, is the real safeguard of the Japanese people, and the secret of the Taikoon's power. It is the want of the last of these two elements, perfect and truthful information, and probity in officials, which is the curse of the government of China.

The Japanese government, such as we have lightly sketched it, has created, apart from a happy and contented people, one which is singularly winning upon the kind estimation of all foreigners who have visited them. Warm-hearted, loving, intelligent, and brave, the European missionary, merchant, and sailor, have all borne testimony to the love and interest they have awakened. "Of white complexion and gentle behaviour," Marco Polo reported them to be, from Chinese authority, and ancient English writers of Queen Elizabeth's time state, "that the inhabitants of Japan show a notable wit, and incredible patience in suffering labour or sorrows. They take diligent care lest, either in word or deed, they should evince fear or dulness of mind, and above all are anxious not to trouble others with their cares or wants. Poverty with them bringeth no damage to the nobility of blood, and they covet, exceedingly, honour and praise. Though generally affable and kind, and in grave courtesy quite a match for a Spaniard, yet they will not allow an injury or insult to pass unpunished. They are very careful," continues the chronicler, "in the entertainment of strangers, and make the very curious inquiry in even the most trifling affairs of foreign people, as of their customs, manners, and invention. Hospitable and generous, they

detest avarice, and forbid gambling. They study martial feats and delight in arms, and the people generally are fair and comely of shape; but being moved to anger, especially in the heat of drink, you may as soon persuade tigers to quietness as them, so obstinate and wilful are they in the fury of their impatience."

On the whole, this is a high character, but word for word might we again, in our day, sum up the good inhabitants of Nipon as exhibiting the same traits. We would have merely to call attention to the interesting fact then recorded, to which late travellers again bear testimony, and that is the pleasing curiosity of the people as to all the doings of their brother-dwellers upon earth, a trait quite as remarkable in the nobility as the lower orders, and accompanied by a most laudable desire to imitate and excel Europeans in their products and manufactures.

There is also a chivalry—a sense of generous devotion, whether it be to duty or to love—which marks them amongst Easterns, and leads us to hope for yet better things of Japan. Indeed, their system of suicide, or "the happy dispatch," as it is called, is merely a high sense of personal honour, misguided through lack of Christian teaching. We there see a nobleman, or indeed a common Japanese, when he has lost his character, or failed in duty to the state, destroy himself, to save to his children and relatives his property and estates, and to expiate in the eyes of his sovereign the crime of which he may have been guilty. The Jesuits tell how nobly converted Japanese men and women laid down their

lives on behalf of Christianity, but we need only turn over the illustrations of their every-day books to feel more and more assured that the Japanese still hold dear all those attributes for which writers of the olden time gave them credit; and that bravery, wit, and chivalry are still found amongst the gallant sons and beautiful daughters of Nipon.

NOTE.—The Japanese are arranged under eight distinct classes, their privileges, mode of living, dress, and even daily expenditure, being distinctly laid down in severe sumptuary laws. The classes consist of princes, nobles, priests, military men, professional or learned ones, merchants, and, lastly, artisans, or labourers. Occasionally, through wealth or merit, individuals are advanced to the class above that in which they are born; but to descend into an inferior one, is to forfeit all claim to respectability.

CHAPTER III.

JAPANESE NAUTICAL ENTERPRISE—EARLY EUROPEAN INTERCOURSE—CHRISTIANITY INTRODUCED WITH GREAT SUCCESS.

REVERTING to the hostilities between China and Japan, which sprung out of the attempt to invade the latter, it soon became evident that the weak mere book-learned civilisation of China was no match for the courage and physical energy of the Japanese islanders. Trained to a seafaring life upon their own storm-swept shores, these bold sailors, returning from successful marauding expeditions against the seaboard of the Chinese empire, awakened a general spirit for adventure amongst the inhabitants of Japan: the Japanese sailor and the Japanese ship became thenceforth formidable throughout the Eastern seas. Apart from the conquest of the Chusan group, and the establishment of military and mercantile posts in Ningpo and other cities on the Chinese seaboard, they ranged in their barks from India to lands situated in the Pacific far to the eastward of their homes. The strong similarity in appearance, habits, and disposition of the Kanaka inhabitants of the Sandwich and Georgian groups leads one to suppose that, if not then, in periods still more

remote, it was the ships of Japan that carried colonists to those distant isles,—and the passions and nautical hardihood of the Malayan races of the Archipelago doubtless received much of their tone from intermixture with these Japanese freebooters. To the present day there is a strong similitude in the character and appearance of these two Eastern races. Of their voyages to the Asiatic continent and Malayan archipelago we have historical record; but until we master the Japanese language sufficiently to explore their ancient writings, we must be content with mythical information as to their wanderings eastward in the Pacific. Aided by such myths, and the light of modern knowledge in the direction of currents and winds, we may try to infer what lands they could have reached which lay beyond the ken of China and India.

Amongst those tales of Japanese explorations in the olden days, there is one strangely circumstantial, recorded by a worthy and venerable Christian historian of China, Father Juan de Mendoza, of the Augustinian Order. The statements there made, though sufficiently startling, do not exceed a condition of public morals prevalent to-day in more than one spot of that South Sea. Writing in 1588, the pious monk says, that at no great distance from Japan, the natives had discovered certain islands nearly peopled by women, and that they might be said to be Amazons, inasmuch as they were expert in the use of arms. To these islands the Japanese went annually in vessels freighted with merchandise, for exchange with the natives, and for

some time there had been an interchange of tendernesses between the Japanese seamen and the fair inhabitants of those islands, leading of course to the result usual in such cases—"Et pour éviter entre eux à tout inconvénient," the following rules were laid down. Directly the Japanese vessels arrived at these islands, two messengers landed, for the purpose of informing of their arrival the king or queen who ruled over these fair nymphs, and of the number of men in the vessels. A day was then appointed on which the Japanese "blue jackets" were to be allowed to land. On that day a bright troop of young ladies, equal in number to the Lotharios from Nipon, sallied down to the strand, each carrying a pair of shoes or sandals carefully marked with the name of the proprietress. These sandals were then, in sight of the visitors, who were still on board their ships, thrown indiscriminately together upon the sea-shore, and the nymphs again retired. "Alors!" says the good priest, in racy old language, "les hommes sautant à terre chaussent chaucun les premiers souliers qu'ils encontrent, et incontinent approchent les femmes." Each of the fair dames of this Eastern Amazonia then claimed for her admirer the Japanese sailor who bore her sandals in his hand. All remonstrance, choice, or exchange was out of the question, whether the lady was "belle comme une ange," ugly, or humpbacked; and each Alphonso was fain to be content with his fair Imogene—an arbitrary proceeding on the part of the ladies, only to be justified in Amazonia. Great care was taken to register the names and residences of all parties,

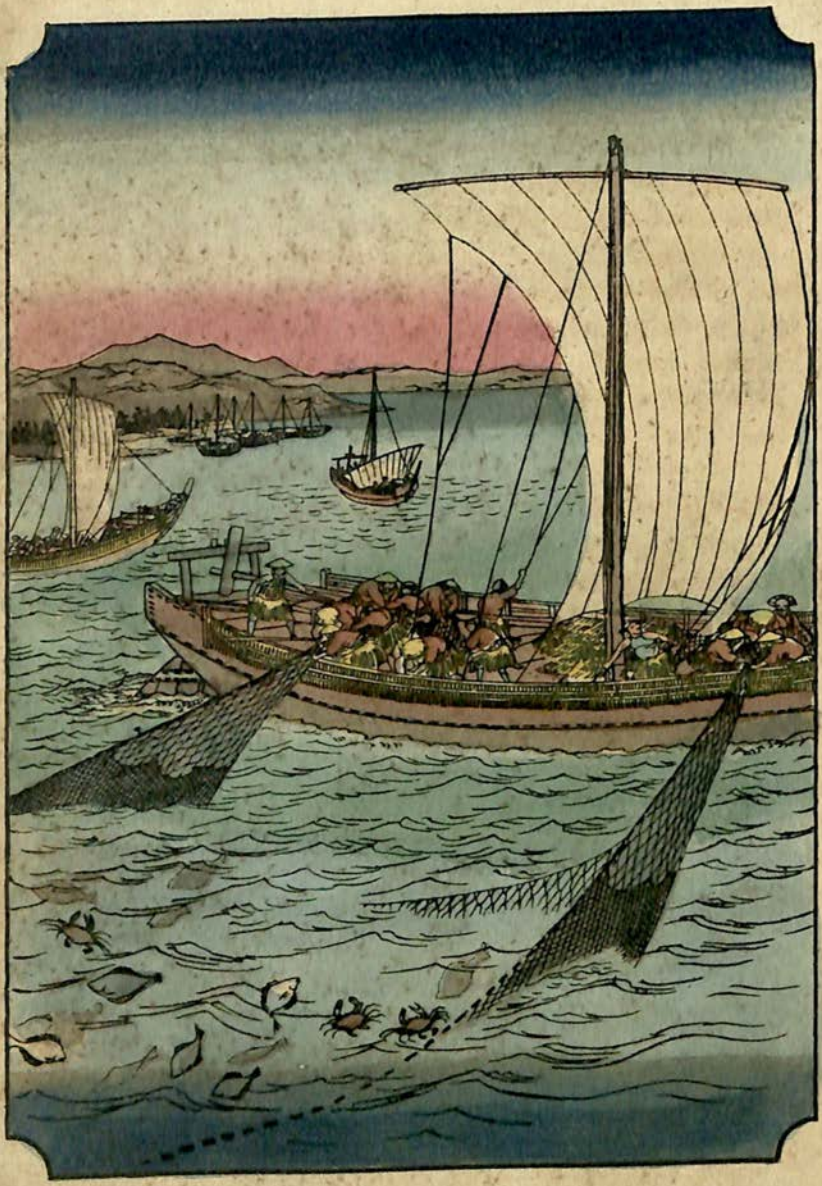
in order that when the Japanese vessels returned in the following year, the sweet pledges of affection which should have been ushered into the world in the meantime might be duly presented to their blushing fathers, and that the law might be observed of allowing the boys to return to Japan, whilst the girls were detained with their mothers.

All this reads strangely like South Sea Island morality, and connects in imagination fair Owhyhee and Otaheite, as Cook and Bligh found them, with the wanderings of these Japanese adventurers.

But we must onward in our fragmentary sketches, premising to those who may be shocked at the scandals involved in this legend of the sea, that it cannot be wrong for a seaman to repeat what a spiritual father thought right to record.

By the year 1540, two hosts of most Christian robbers were rapidly advancing upon the Zipangu of Marco Polo—the Spaniard by way of the Americas, the Portuguese by that of the Cape of Good Hope. The latter won the race. By the early part of the sixteenth century the azure flag and emblazoned arms of Portugal had carried sword and cross from the Red Sea to the Straits of Malacca, and the cry of the slaughtered and plundered Mahomedans and Hindoos went up from Zeylah and Aden on the east, to Malacca on the west. In advance, however, of the legitimate arms of Portugal, there was a host of deserters and adventurers, who embarked in native Malay or Arab vessels, and explored the way to fresh scenes of rapine. These pirates

were as jackals to the lions following in their wake. Such was one Fernandez Mendez Pinto, who with many more of a like repute harassed and robbed along the coast of China, until they met and coalesced with the Japanese pirates frequenting the neighbourhood of Ningpo, or Lampo, as it was then called. Pinto accompanied his new allies upon a grand robbing expedition to some island in the neighbourhood of that port, probably to the one now known in the Chusan group as Kin-shan, or Golden Island, the necropolis past and present for many a wealthy Chinaman, of whose desire to take to the heaven of Budha some of his earthly treasures, these worthies doubtless took undue advantage. But we are applying hard names to the followers of Bernal Diaz, and the avant-couriers of Albuquerque. Perhaps the reader may, on perusing what we have just said of Pinto's researches in Kin-shan, be inclined to add to the terms buccaneer and pirate, those of sacrilegious robber and defiler of the resting-places of the dead! Let us be just to Fernandez Mendez Pinto, and his hardy fraternity. We are all—ay, all—my American cousins, as big buccaneers as ever they were; and as to robbing the dead, why one Frenchman, and he is no worse than many an Englishman, except in that his opportunity is greater, has very recently broken up many thousand departed Egyptians for the few paltry ornaments wrapt up in their cerements! And, as we write, the negroes of Panama are disentombing a race of buried Indians for the sake of a few golden idols that the dead hoped to take with them to their happy hunting-grounds.



Fishing Boats at Sea.

Let us, then, cease to rail at these men of the sixteenth century, and remember that the world is three hundred years older, without being very much better.

As the interdict against strangers visiting Japan, arising out of Kublai Khan's invasion, had not been revoked, it is natural to suppose that the plea of accident or stress of weather was advanced by the enterprising Pinto, when he accompanied his new-found friends to Japan. This event, from the concurrent testimony of Japanese and Portuguese chronicles, occurred about the years 1542 or 1543; and, although Pinto for a long time rejoiced in the reputation of a liar, for having said that he wintered in Zipangu, there is every reason to believe that he did so. Strangely enough, some testimony in his favour has very recently been elicited through the industrious researches of Mr. Harris, the present able American minister at the court of Yedo. During his residence at Simoda in 1855-56, Mr. Harris was struck with the strong resemblance of a Japanese fire-arm, which he observed in the hands of the higher officials, to the ancient "petronel" of Europe. On inquiry, he learnt that these arms were mostly manufactured on the island of Kanagasima, and that the natives of that dependency of the empire had long been famous for the art. A knowledge of the mode of constructing these petronels had been acquired, they said, several centuries previously from Europeans on board a vessel that was forced there by a tempest; and furthermore Mr. Harris thought he could trace in the Japanese term for this weapon a corruption of its Portuguese name, all of

which information we may safely carry to the credit of the old Portuguese buccaneer. The intelligence carried back by Pinto to his countrymen in China and the Eastern Seas, caused many to visit that southernmost island of the Japanese empire which is now named Kiu-siu, but in those times was called Bongo, after one of the large principalities into which it was divided. Three of the most influential princes of this island received the Portuguese with open arms, and the prince of Fizen, whose territories were situated on the western side of the island, gave them free permission to trade or settle in all the parts under his especial control. The chiefs of Arima, Oruma, and Bongo were equally zealous to secure the advantages of Portuguese intercourse; they touted for yearly visits from these western adventurers, they coveted the wonderful novelties of Europe, or the rich products of Hindostan and Arabia, which the Portuguese were able to import, and they joyfully paid the most outrageous prices for all these commodities. The excitement for foreign intercourse extended to the Japanese seamen and merchants, and we find them frequently mentioned by Spanish and Portuguese writers of this period as sailing and trading to their settlements of Macao, Malacca, and the Philippines; and the commercial intercourse, especially with the Portuguese, became in a very short time most important.

The Church of Rome took good care in those days that the servants of the cross were not far behind the pioneers of European civilisation, and from several quarters the devoted

disciples of Ignatius Loyola hastened to the rich harvest awaiting them in Japan. François Xavier, then at Goa, fired by his wonderful success in Southern India, longed to hasten to the far East, whence rumours soon reached the seat of Portuguese power of the hospitality of the inhabitants of Japan to European visitors. This desire appears to have been further stimulated by the arrival at Goa of a Japanese, who encouraged Xavier to undertake the task, assuring him of unbounded success.

Xavier started in 1549, only five years after the adventurous Pinto had first re-discovered that empire—"where gold was as dross, and the people of gentle manners, though brave:" yet Xavier was not in time to claim the honour of having been the first to introduce his creed amongst the Japanese; for on his arrival at Macao in China, he learnt that at any rate a faith in the cross as the real panacea for all mundane evils was already making rapid progress amongst the people of the province of Bongo. It appears that some priests of the Roman faith, whether Spanish or Portuguese our worthy chronicler does not say, succeeded, before Xavier's arrival, in reaching the shores of Japan. They had been kindly received; but as the Bonzes of the Budhist faith were common throughout the country, the arrival of strangers strongly resembling them in appearance and professions did not at first excite astonishment, or impress the natives with any great respect for the sanctity of their mission. The profanity of a Japanese prince, however, gave the servants of Rome an opportunity to strike awe into

the minds of their future converts. This prince, in waggish mood, put up his reverend visitors in a mansion sadly haunted by evil spirits, without telling them of the trick he desired to play them. When night came, and they sought repose, they were disturbed by dreadful apparitions and prodigious spectres, horrid noises, and rattling of chains. The stools and cushions flew about the apartments, and their reverences' garments were torn off their backs: expecting every minute to be destroyed by these Japanese demons, they prayed, and used all known exorcisms; at last they signed themselves with the sign of the cross, and scored it on the walls and door-posts. The demons of Japan could not withstand this. They fled, and the good fathers slept

THE MAN CAUGHT IN HIS OWN TRAP.

in peace. Next day, the wicked prince and the people heard with astonishment of this cure for haunted houses; they

were almost persuaded to Christianity, and "in token of it," naïvely says the ancient writer, "and to keep away evil spirits from their abodes, crosses were marked upon all their walls and door-posts throughout that city." The poor Japanese prince had been caught in his own trap, much in the same way that we find the old adage here illustrated by a native artist of Yedo, and the prince could hardly have given the clever priests a better opportunity of proving that they were still more astute necromancers than any Japan could boast.

Encouraged by this promising intelligence, Xavier pushed on from Macao, and, after dire adventures, reached Japan, to find princes and people ready to receive his earnest and zealous preaching. The three great and almost independent rulers of the island of Kiu-siu were publicly received into the Church of Rome, and for about fifteen years, that is, from 1560 to 1575, the progress of Christianity was most rapid. Xavier, however, only stayed long enough to see the cross flash through the island of Kiu-siu or Bongo. Elated at his success, satisfied with the idea that all Japan would follow the example of the thousands upon whom he had laid hands, pleased with the tractable gentle nature of the Japanese as they came under his own observation, ignoring the sullen bearing of the large priesthood of the Buddhist and Sin-foo faiths, whose temples he and his followers had overthrown, the great apostle turned his eyes to the yet unopened land of China; and leaving his blessing with the people who, he tells us, "were truly the delight of his heart," he went forth

to lay down his life as the first of that truly noble army of martyrs who have fallen in striving to sow the seeds of faith in that religionless land of Cathay. During the next fifteen years the thirty thousand converts of Xavier swelled into more than a million in number. We find by the letters of the Jesuit fathers to their superiors, that by 1577 they had progressed as far as Miaco in Nipon, the great spiritual capital itself. There, on one occasion, in the stronghold of the ancient faith of Japan, no less than 7000 persons were baptized; and a church had been so skilfully erected, so richly ornamented, that it conduced much to raise Christianity in Japanese estimation, and enabled the fathers to preach the faith openly and safely in the most remote portions of the empire. But it was in Kiu-siu Island that the success of Christianity was most marked. There were *three* churches and a college established in Fizen alone, of which Nangasaki was the capital town; and, indeed, it appears from the testimony of all writers, that the only check in that quarter arose from the frequency of wars and insurrections between the great feudal princes, owing to the decay of the imperial power during the reign of the Emperor Nobunanga. This Zio-goon, or Taikoon as we call him, had great difficulty in crushing a general disposition of his princes to throw off the control of their sovereign; but whilst his great general, Taiko-sama, was employed in quelling these insurrections, the Emperor is said by the Jesuits—writing from Miaco in 1770—to have treated them with such kindness and attention that the

Christian clergy were esteemed before the Buddhist bonzes in Miaco. The poor native priests, however, had, it appears to us, ample cause for complaint. Apart from the mere fact of the inroads upon their flocks and the loss of good repute, the determined hostility of the Romish priesthood to the ancient faith of the Japanese people was most marked. Nothing could have been more intemperate than that hot zeal, though at the same time we cannot deny such zeal the merit of courage, when we think of those solitary Jesuit priests thrown into a foreign land, cut off from their countrymen—indeed, never hoping for support except from their God—yet sitting calmly down in a great city like Miaco, then probably more populous than any town in Europe, and writing to their superior that they never lost an opportunity of vilifying the false gods around them, or of defying the thousands of bonzes and faquirs of Miaco.

There is a curious instance of this reckless zeal which was so soon to bring sorrow upon all Japan, in a letter from a Father Orgatin, dated Miaco, in Nipon Island, September 20th, 1577, which we think deeply interesting, as it serves to warn us from a repetition of such intolerance in our coming relations with these same people: "Not more than three leagues from Miaco," says the father, "there is on the top of a lofty mountain a famous native temple, dedicated to the *devil*, which is much frequented by natives from all parts of the empire. The bonzes in charge live by attending to the religious services there practised. I never fail to constantly express my hope of one day levelling that

temple, and to raise upon its site a better one to the honour of Monsieur the Archangel St. Michael, and to plant upon the summit of that mount a crucifix, which shall always be seen by the people of Miaco, and to the exaltation of the glory of God." Father Orgatin then says, that alarmed at his threats, and at certain proceedings of his in other quarters, —where, after a wholesale christening of 400 persons, he whetted their new faith by inducing them to enter a temple and decapitate a number of idols,—the bonzes very naturally complained of him to the authorities. In spite, however, of an official notice, prohibiting the enterprising priest from carrying out his intentions with respect to the temple on the hill, he tells us, that he consoled himself with the hope that his Heavenly Father would show him a way to cast down with his own hands these vain idols, and thus, as he says, "subject the arch-enemy of mankind to great pain and mortification."

In another letter we find a graphic account of a regular razzia carried on in the district of Arima against the Budhist idols. The bonzes, hunted and persecuted, carried their graven images down the face of a fearful precipice and hid them away in a vast cave, seldom accessible; a traitor carried information of this abode of gods retired from business to the Christian priest, who, heading some native zealots, succeeded in reaching "this cave full of devils," and there, amidst the cries of the horror-stricken bonzes, the rage and grief of pagans, smote off the heads and limbs of their gods and hurled them into the sea! How complacently the priest tells

his tale, and dilates upon the pain and chagrin he has that day occasioned to a certain party, whose immediate presence in Japan is, he is sure, attested by the numerous earthquakes and volcanoes!

Whilst the intolerance of the Romish clergy was thus exciting the fear and hostility of a numerous native priesthood, as well as the religious mendicants, and the thousand and one hermits of Fusi-hama; whilst the progress of Christianity threatened to deprive of their substance those who lived by the pilgrimages to her ancient shrines and temples; the merchants and seamen of Spain and Portugal were not less successful in alienating the respect of the native authorities and officials. The Portuguese had grown rich and insolent by their trade with China and Japan. Fixing their head-quarters at Nangasaki, their traders had intermarried with the daughters of the richest natives, and obtained such a footing in the country as to already threaten its liberties.

The commerce with Portugal rapidly assumed a character which was naturally distasteful to the ruler of the Japanese people—it was a simple export of her metallic currency against the products of India and Europe; and, added to this, there is reason to fear that Japanese subjects were kidnapped or enslaved by the Portuguese, and carried out of the country for sale in their Eastern possessions.

CHAPTER IV.

REACTION AGAINST CHRISTIANITY—PERSECUTION AND EXPULSION OF EUROPEANS—THE EMPEROR TAIKO-SAMA.

EUROPEAN relations with Japan appear to have culminated about 1577; then it is that we read of that embassy to Rome, which is the only one on record, previous to that which has recently reached the United States. The envoys on that occasion did not, however, come from the Emperor, but from the almost independent princes of Bungo, Arima, and Oruma. We gather that this embassy sailed from Nangasaki, and, after many dangers, reached Macao at the entrance of the Canton river. Detained there for nine months, for want of shipping, they eventually proceeded to Malacca, but were attacked by enemies on the way and sadly pillaged and evil-entreated before reaching that place. Passing on to Hindostan they travelled to Goa, and were received in great state by the Portuguese viceroy. Embarking thence in a Portuguese ship, they sailed for Europe, and at last disembarked in the Tagus, after a three years' voyage from Japan! Brave shows and pageants here awaited them, and Mr. Buchanan and the White House at Washington

A PARTY CROSSING A FORD.

must have exerted themselves if they desired the comparison to be given in favour of the United States of to-day against the courts of the Kings of Portugal and Spain in those times. We are told how they journeyed through Talavera and Toledo to where Philip of Castille entertained them with splendour and kindness in his palace of the Escurial; and how he displayed his treasury overflowing, because the Plate fleet had just arrived safe from the Americas!

We wonder whether Mr. Gladstone would be able to show a Japanese embassy an equally pleasing sight in Downing Street, or whether the First Lord could report as favourably of the present employment of her Majesty's ships.

We are afraid to say how long the Japanese envoys spent in Alicante, Majorca, and Minorca, and may merely tell that they landed in Pisa, and that the Duke of Florence received them right royally. Rome welcomed them with the greatest pomp; first marched his Holiness' life-guards in rich and costly habits; then the Switzers; then the attendants of the cardinals glittering in gold and carnation silks. One envies the fair sex the sensation which visions of such bravery must occasion. The princes and nobility with kettle-drums beating a rare symphony preceded the Japanese envoys, curiously attired, after their manner, in garments embroidered with birds and flowers; they each had two swords—it was remarked—and that the hilts and scabbards were rich with pearls and diamonds. Thus they marched in proud array until they entered the presence where sat his Holiness, surrounded with cardinals and bishops *in pontificalibus*, a

wilderness of croziers, crosses, and surplices, exceeding all the gorgeous shows ever before seen in Rome or Miaco. Here the envoys kissed his Holiness' feet, and publicly announced their mission; it was, that "to the most zealous and chief Vicar supplying Christ's place on earth, the Prince and Holy Father," one Trimus, King of Bungo, threw himself in all humility at his most blessed feet!

It was difficult in those days to get to Rome from Japan, but it appears to have been a still more hazardous undertaking to get back again; for, in spite of apostolic blessings, the unfortunate envoys took nearly five years to return home—a home which they reached only in time to find it a sad scene of misery and bloodshed. Indeed, we never hear anything more of them than that they did return; and then in a few years afterwards, when martyrdom awaited all professors in the faith of Rome, we read of one of these poor envoys proudly accepting death and torture, "for he who had kissed the feet of the Vicar of God would not recant"—a generous resolution which speaks volumes for the nation that can produce such men.

In the year 1578, the storm that had so long threatened was about to burst upon Japan, but not before some of the calmer and wiser of the Christian clergy had foreseen it must soon arrive. The three great princes of Bungo who had first received the Christian sacrament were dead; wars and rebellion followed in their states. The Jesuits were not wanting in that crisis; they toiled most fearlessly; there were fifty-five of them, or twenty-three priests and thirty-two

laymen, whose lives were a constant pilgrimage, wandering from place to place, cheering the faithful, threatening the backsliders. Religious dissension, it is allowed, was the main cause of this distracted condition of the interior of Bungo; and added to that, the reckless indifference to life which the natives exhibited when once their passions were awakened. Just about this time, too, a terrible calamity aroused the fears and suspicions of the governing classes against all the religious bodies whether native or foreign. The Emperor Nobananga, after suppressing with great bloodshed one rebellion of the native priesthood, was traitorously slain by an assassin in his own palace; and the Christians with him lost their best friend and ally.

The court of this potentate vied in magnificence, we are told, with the most brilliant of Europe in that day; and on perusing all the minute details given by Charles the Second's master of the revels, we cannot but come to the conclusion, that, Christianity apart, the Japanese nation in 1577, and up to 1650, were quite as civilised, and quite as advanced in most of the arts and sciences, as we were in England. The reception of the Japanese envoys at Rome was not a jot more magnificent than the grand tournay held by the Emperor Nobananga at Miaco to receive some present sent him by a Pope. We there read how he caused a large space to be levelled, three times as large as the great square of Lisbon; how it was set round with the tents and pavilions of all his princes and barons; how it was filled with men in rich liveries; how the good priests could

A JAPANESE LADY, FAMOUS FOR HER COURAGE AND STRENGTH, CALMLY SURVEYING A LANDSCAPE, WHILST STANDING ON THE HALTER OF A VERY RESTIVE STEED.

not find words to extol sufficiently the gorgeous richness of the velvets, brocades, and tapestries; the long lines of gentlemen bravely attired; the flags, and the noise of barbaric music. The Emperor in state opens the tournay, and receives the papal present—a chair of state. Then there are courses, jousts, tournaments, and fights, in which the Emperor Nobananga carries off many prizes. The scene winds up with gladiatorial displays, in which there is a regular fray and shout as of battle, "their gorgeous armours and shining weapons glittering under a bright sun, and forming a noble picture of war," only marred, says the priestly chronicler, in the savage expenditure of human blood by the combatants in the heat of battle.

Taiko-sama, the commander-in-chief of the murdered Nobananga's armies, was no ordinary man. On the death of his patron, he fell upon the rebellious native priesthood and nobility, and either destroyed them, or caused them to submit to his power. In a short time he assumed the imperial authority, and took care to make it be felt in the most remote portions of the empire, where his former master had had little, if any, power. He appears early to have suspected the disinterestedness of his foreign visitors, and to have decided on adhering to the old faith of Japan, taking care, however, to still farther reduce the temporal authority of his spiritual coadjutor the Mikado. It was now that the Christians began to reap the fruits of the cupidity of the mercantile fraternity, and the thoughtless conduct of religious fanatics. There are some curious

documents extant upon the native view of the conduct of Europeans in those days, which it would be well for our politicians and others to peruse; for assuredly we are, by the inconsiderate conduct of Europeans, tending again in the present day to awaken similar feelings of hostility.* We there read that a Minister of State thus addresses Taiko: "Be wary, O my Liege! of these Christians; mistrust the union that exists amongst them. * * * Bethink thee what destruction there hath been of our temples and holy establishments, so that our provinces seem as if they had been laid waste by fire and sword. These priests proclaim that they have come from afar to save us from perdition; but may not some dangerous project lurk beneath this fair pretext. Have you not an example in the recent revolt of the bonzes of Osaca? Now treachery may be hid under the cloak of religion. The Europeans are not less traitorous, be assured. They have in Nangasaki a perfect fortress; by it they can obtain foreign aid. Not a moment should be lost if you consult the safety of the State!" Others called attention to the drain of gold and silver, and to the deficiency of the currency in the State; and whilst Taiko was hesitating how to act—for, though severe, he does not appear to have been a cruel man—the conduct of the Portuguese and Spaniards, lay and clerical, was most intemperate, and calculated to bring on a crisis.

There were local risings in many parts of the empire; the

* Some of these may be found in the "Memorials of Japan," edited by Thomas Rundall, Esq., and published by the Hakluyt Society.

church at Miaco was destroyed, the fathers escaping with difficulty. Christianity had been early uprooted from the island of Sikok, and death in many shapes began to threaten the native converts in Kiu-siu. The doubts and misgivings of these converts are exemplified in an original Japanese letter, happily preserved amongst Jesuit archives. The writer, a native nobleman, writes as follows to his spiritual father:—

"Aware that your reverence intends to return, I hasten to inform you of the state of affairs here. Subsequent to your departure hence, I became desirous of baptism, and unwilling to await for your return, I sought the right at the hands of the priest at Funay, and an opportunity soon after occurring, I had the good fortune to recover all my states except the city of Fata, whither retired my enemy, Tosaquami, with some six hundred followers, but with very little prospect of being long able to hold out. Mindful of my vows to God for the benefits thus accruing, I immediately ordered a church to be built, as well as an abode for the holy fathers, and assigned them revenues in perpetuity. Furthermore, I caused similar houses to be constructed elsewhere in my kingdom, and all my subjects, seeing I was thus powerfully aided of the Lord, were on the point of becoming Christians likewise, when most suddenly the whole kingdom revolted against me, and I had to flee to my present retreat, Nangaxima. To this hour I cease not to lament my fate before the Lord; and I own some doubts have arisen in my mind at the success of these rebels, seeing that they are pagans, or whether their good fortune is to be attributed to the multitude of my sins.

I therefore beg your reverence to recommend me in your prayers, and to send some one to resolve my doubts," &c. &c.

This curious confession of a half-converted mind bears the date 1576; and comes from a prince of Tosa. We hardly need a better proof of how weak was the foundation upon which the Christian faith rested, the material advantages of the aid of Providence being evidently those upon which the worthy prince placed most importance.

In the year 1587 Taiko sent two commissioners to the head of the Jesuit church in Bongo, calling for categorical answers to the following questions: Why do you and your associates use force in the promulgation of your creed? Why do you invite my people to the destruction of the public temples, and persecution of native priesthood? Why do your countrymen consume cattle, so useful to man and needful for agricultural purposes? Finally, Why do your traders kidnap my subjects, and carry them off as slaves? The replies, couched in terms of no great humility, denied the employment of force in conversion, but pleaded holy zeal as the cause of the destruction of the false gods, and that the bonzes brought ridicule upon themselves by the absurdities they upheld; they regretted the slaying of oxen, and promised to check it; and, without denying the charge of a traffic in human beings, they said it was in the power of the native authorities to check it if they pleased. Full of wrath at this unsatisfactory explanation, the Emperor launched an edict against further promulgation of Christi-

anity, and ordered the professors of it to quit his realms. Of course, the authorities at the Portuguese and Spanish settlements in the East rushed to the rescue of their co-religionists; but it was only by moral support that they dared act against a warlike sovereign and a people whose desperate courage was respected by all who had intercourse with them. The Emperor answered all such protests calmly and rationally. He replied to the Viceroy of Spain: "Place yourself in my position, the ruler of a great empire, and suppose my subjects were to enter your state on pretence of teaching a new doctrine. If you subsequently found that they merely made such professions a mask for subverting your authority, would you not treat them as traitors? Such I hold the fathers to be to my state, and as such I treat them." Taiko, however, was prudent in the measures he took to discountenance a faith which evidently struck at the root of imperial authority as established in Japan; and, by way of giving vent to a certain pugnacity visible in his Christian subjects, he directed large armies of them to the conquest of the Corean Peninsula, and encouraged them to not only settle there, but if they pleased, to exercise their spirit of propagandism upon the inhabitants of that country. This policy was so successful, that during his reign Japanese influence and authority is said to have become paramount in that little known country, and it was only uprooted by subsequent interference of the Court of Pekin. The forbearance of Taiko-sama was misconstrued by some zealots from the Philippines, who persisted in landing and preach-

ing in spite of his interdict. The Emperor issued a warrant, ordering them to be executed; and twenty-three priests suffered death at Nangasaki in 1597,—a fearful example of Taiko's power, intended evidently to warn the forty thousand Christians then living in and about that city of the consequences of incurring his displeasure, or disobeying his laws.

When it is remembered that these twenty European Christians were the only ones executed during the ten years the edict had been in force against them, it would be hardy fair to accuse Taiko of cruelty—and even in this case, political as well as religious reasons may have had much weight in occasioning so large an execution. The authorities of Macao and Manilla had fiercely resented the action of Taiko-sama against their priesthood, and wantonly executed some of his subjects in the former city, as well as committed an act of bloodthirsty piracy upon a Japanese vessel off the shores of the Philippines. These acts were not likely to mollify the temper of an Eastern despot, and perhaps one of the ablest men who ever ruled over Japan. He died soon afterwards, but not before his energy, bravery, and skill had imperishably enshrined his memory in the love and admiration of his countrymen. To this day, the name of Taiko-sama, or the most high and sovereign lord, is, we are told, spoken of with reverence throughout the empire. His valour, abilities, and devotion to the interests of Japan, still form the theme of her poets and painters—and it pleases the idiosyncrasy of this people that their

great warrior-statesman—their second Sin-fuh—combined great talents with a rough, unpleasing exterior. All impartial foreign writers bear testimony to the abilities, and we may almost say virtues, of this extraordinary man, who reformed and reconstituted the Japanese empire, and left it much as we now find it. When he ascended the throne—to use his own words—he found the kingdom distracted with civil wars, the native bonzes endeavouring to grasp the supreme power, so as to re-establish the Theocracy as founded of old, the Christianised chiefs attempting to throw off their allegiance to the Imperial power, and the whole land a scene of turmoil. He devoted himself to the task of regenerating his country: he omitted nothing to make all men esteem him for valour and earnestness of purpose. By energy and firmness he fully succeeded, and lived to see the state ruled as one nation, instead of sixty petty kingdoms. "Severe I may be deemed," says Taiko, "but I am only so to the evil-doers: the good repose confidently under my protection, and Japan is now a rock which may not be easily shaken from its foundation."

The martial spirit which Taiko called into existence amongst his followers exists still throughout the whole of the upper classes. Military rank takes precedence of mere literary merit, contrary to what is the case in China, and we find the Japanese of the higher classes rank far before those of the neighbouring continent in personal bravery, and they possess in a great degree that spirit of chivalry, honour, and generosity, which in this country is said to define a

gentleman. The Jesuit records, as well as the writings of Kæmpfer and others, are replete with instances illustrative of these qualities in the Japanese, and under trials of no ordinary nature. We even find in the sketches and illustrations sold in the shops abundant proof that these qualities are still looked upon with love and interest. We see a picture of two horsemen charging a host of enemies; in another place, a single-handed knight holds a drawbridge, and flings his foes into the moat: a royal army, under a great leader, quells a host of rebels. Women are not deficient in this quality of valour, or devotion to duty; and we see the lovely daughter of a great sea-king rewarding with her hand the gallant leader of a victorious army. Better still, we see, when war's alarms are laid aside, little touches of nature, which make the whole world a-kin. We read of Japanese Portias, who will not survive disgrace;—of others, whose gentle wit saves a husband's life and honour; and last, but not least, we hail such proofs of the civilisation of these Eastern people as are evinced in the following little sketch.

A distinguished general—it may be the great Taiko-sama himself, although we fear the officer is not half ugly enough—encounters a beautiful maiden, in a heavy shower of rain. She has taken shelter under some rose-bushes;—most appropriate shelter for one so lovely. But in spite of rain, and despite of rank, the gallant son of the Japanese Mars uncovers to salute one so surpassingly beautiful—whilst she, blushing, trembling, with downcast looks, acknowledges his

A JAPANESE HERO IN THE RAIN TAKING OFF HIS HAT TO A LADY OF SURPASSING BEAUTY.

courtesy by presenting flowers. A charming idyl—a picture of the combination of military and social virtues worth a whole bookful of type. There is, of course, a dark side to Japanese, as well as European society; we will touch upon it hereafter, but let us for the present carry these traits to their credit.

DOCTOR EXAMINING THE TONGUE OF PATIENT.

CHAPTER V.

EARLY DUTCH AND BRITISH INTERCOURSE—INFLUENCE OF WILLIAM ADAMS—THE ENGLISH TREATY WITH JAPAN OF 1613.

THE execution of the disobedient Christian priests and the death of Taiko-sama followed, as we have already said, close upon each other. The new Emperor, beset with difficulties, paused for awhile in the prosecution of his predecessor's views against the Portuguese and Spaniards, although it appears that the natives of the country who had

become Christians were treated with unmitigated severity,—death or recantation were their only alternatives. We need not dwell on this painful episode of Japanese history, but there is no doubt that between about 1580 and 1620 nigh upon a million and a half of Christianised natives perished, and that the Europeans after the year 1600 made few fresh converts.

Spain never appears to have had any great commercial relations with Japan, and directly the Franciscan monks were banished from Japan, the Spaniards may be said to disappear from the field, except by the accidental wreck of a galleon, bound to Acapulco, upon the west coast of Nipon, and the exchange of courtesies which ensued from the generous treatment they received at the hands of the Japanese authorities. The Portuguese still maintained their trading posts at Nangasaki and its neighbourhood, and the Jesuit priests, constantly recruited from the great college at Goa, perseveringly intrigued to regain the ground they had lost in the confidence of the ruling classes. Portuguese interests, however, were doomed to receive a blow from a quarter whence danger could then have been little anticipated. The ships of Holland and of England, not men-of-war, not royal ships, but those of their enterprising traders, were, about this time, struggling to reach a land of which marvellous tales were then rife in the seaports of Rotterdam, London, and Plymouth.

Drake and Cavendish, in 1577 and 1586, brought home such astounding proofs of the untold wealth of the nations

dwelling upon the shores of the great South Sea, and of the arrogant weakness of the twain bullies of Rome who wished to monopolise the plunder of those heathen, that the stout burghers and hardy seamen of Northern Europe determined to contest that right in spite of Dons, Jesuits, or Inquisition. In 1598, two expeditions sailed from Holland—one from the Texel, and the other from Rotterdam. The Texel squadron of five ships was purely Dutch, commanded by one Jacques Mahay, whilst the Rotterdam fleet was a combined one, two out of the four vessels being English. It is worthy of note that the pilots of both these fleets were Englishmen, who had obtained great experience in long voyages. For instance, we find that in the Texel fleet there was William Adams of Gillingham, and his good friend Timothy Shotten, who had circumnavigated the globe a few years previously with Cavendish; whilst in the Rotterdam fleet another of Cavendish's old followers, Captain Melish, undertook a similarly responsible task. It is foreign to our purpose to follow these stout seamen, these pioneers of Dutch and English enterprise, wealth, and success in the East, through their long and hazardous voyaging. The Rotterdam fleet saw and heard but twice of their brethren during many years, and in neither case was their intelligence cheering. In the Straits of Magellan, they met one of the Texel ships much shattered by weather, her crew broken down and disheartened, and only anxious to escape back in safety to their homes. They reported, however, that the ships in which were embarked the English pilots, Will

Adams and Shotten, had proceeded into the great South Sea. Our Rotterdam friends, following Drake's example, went direct from a little promiscuous plundering on the coast of South America to the Philippine Isles, in the hope of capturing something that would enrich them, and repay all their sufferings. Less fortunate, they had more hard knocks, and found no pieces of gold, no "ryalls" of plate, no galleon "ladened" with Mexican silver to exchange for Chinese produce. However, we find them, one December morning of 1600, boarding, off Manilla, a Japanese vessel, which had been twenty-five days out from a port of that country; and Oliver Van Noort and Captain Melish then first learnt and recorded the news of the thriving trade of the Portugals in Japan, and how Japanese vessels came south, "ladened with precious metals, and much victual." The strong north-east monsoon of that season forbade Captain Melish proceeding in the direction of the much to be desired El Dorado, so he turned highwayman, and obtained at "an easy rate," as he naïvely remarks, all that they wanted, excepting gold and silver. During the cruise of this Rotterdam fleet we are told incidentally, that whilst in Borneo they heard from a Japanese ship of the ultimate fate of the last of the other Dutch expedition. There is something touching in the words in which Melish records his information. "We then heard," he says, "of a great Hollander, by tempests shaken, which had put into Japan, the company by famine and sickness all but fourteen dead!" Let us turn to the adventures of that great

Hollander, and her gallant survivors. On a spring morning, supposed to be the 11th April, 1600, a sea-worn, tempest-tossed vessel drifted rather than sailed into a port upon the east coast of Kiu-siu, or Bongo. She was the only survivor of that squadron of five that had sailed from the Texel in 1598. The last of her consorts, piloted by Timothy Shotten, went down in the deep sea of the North Pacific, and she (the Erasmus) had much to do to reach any haven. From the letters subsequently received from Japan, written by the English pilot of the Erasmus, we learn how dire was their necessity; for when the anchor was joyfully let go in that port, "hard unto Bungo," he, Will Adams, of the strong heart, and ten others of her company, were only able to creep about upon their hands and knees, and the rest, amongst whom was the captain, looked every moment for death. The Japanese received these new-comers with kindness, and the authorities were not a little astonished to find there were others, as bold seamen, as enterprising navigators, as they of Portugal and Spain.

The Zio-goon, or Taikoon, sent for William Adams, and must have been interested in the honest fearlessness of the old scurvy-stricken sailor, who, having tenderly bid his ship-mates good-bye, and commended his soul to God, boldly told the successor of Taiko-sama that his countrymen had long sought the Indies for mercantile purposes, and that his sovereign was at war with all Portugals and Spaniards, though at peace with the world beside. The Taikoon, doubtless, was not sorry at the prospect of European aid,

thus held out, to rid himself of the threatening military preponderance of those two great powers. If others dare beard the Don, why might not he? And the Japanese monarch must have marked the contempt of the Hollander and Englishman for the military prowess of those two nations of Southern Europe that had hitherto carried all before them in the East. The Portuguese and Jesuits used all their arts and influence to have the wretched crew of the Erasmus executed as pirates. They failed signally; and, although the Erasmus was confiscated, and her people desired to consider themselves to all intents and purposes Japanese, the kindness they experienced in other respects was very great. Will Adams became in time the European adviser to the emperor, and for years afterwards we constantly meet the name of our honest pilot as the transactor of business between the court of Yedo and the subjects of foreign powers. Mindful of his friends the Dutchmen, he secured to them, in 1601, a port of trade at a place called Firando, an island off the west coast of Kiu-siu, not very distant from Nangasaki. Indeed, in his own quaint way, he tells us as much in a letter bearing date January 12th, 1613. "The Hollanders being now settled," says Adams, "I have got them such privileges as the Spaniards and Portuguese could never get, and last year those nations tried to employ me to obtain them like advantages; but, upon consideration of further inconvenience, I have not sought it for them."

There is little doubt, from the rapid decadence of Portuguese commerce and influence after the arrival of the

Erasmus and William Adams, that Englishmen and Dutchmen contributed in no small degree to enlighten the Japanese as to the best mode of getting rid of those their first European friends. Year by year, fresh restrictions, fresh annoyances, rendered the position of the Portuguese more and more intolerable, and at last they may almost be said to have voluntarily withdrawn, leaving the field clear to their more energetic opponents, the heretics of Europe. The Portuguese went not away empty-handed, and either through their system of commerce, or system of plunder, they drew off a quantity of gold from the country which, for those times, seems almost fabulous—so much so, indeed, that it became a common saying amongst the Portuguese of Macao, "that if they could have preserved the Japanese trade to themselves for a few years more, the streets of that colony would have been paved with gold kobangs;" a boast only on a par with the offer of the Spanish citizens of Lima, who tried to induce the Emperor to visit that city by offering to lay down silver ingots for him to travel upon from Callao to the city gates, a distance of eight miles. According to one writer the sum of gold and silver carried off by the Portuguese during three years amounted to the enormous figure of 2,713,795*l.* sterling; but the Hollanders subsequently exceeded this considerably, for, by an estimate made by Mr. Rendall, in his curious compilation of Japanese information, they exported, in some thirty years or so, nigh upon twenty-nine and three-quarter millions' worth of the precious metals from the two ports of Firando and Nangasaki.

Whilst the Emperor thus liberally entertained the newly-arrived Dutchmen, and especially our countryman (indeed, he raised him to the high office of Imperial tutor, and charged him with the responsibility of constructing vessels upon the model of the Erasmus), the Roman Catholic Christians in Kiu-siu were perseveringly persecuted; and when they, in despair, flew to arms, they were ultimately exterminated, and, sad to say, in that final extinction of the faith implanted by the brethren of Xavier, the Dutch took a lamentable part. We need say no more, than that they subsequently themselves suffered the deepest humiliation, and although, as the poet observes—

Gold helps the hurt that honour feels,

the Hollanders, in their wretched prison of Nangasaki, had for centuries to regret that they should have allowed themselves to be tempted by Asiatics to take a part in exterminating men who, whatever were their faults, were nevertheless fellow-Christians. The success of the Taikoon against the representatives of those two great powers, whose colonies and forces had hitherto awed the kings and nobles of all Eastern nations, rendered him perfectly at his ease in the treatment of the Dutch and English. At first they were granted most liberal concessions. The treaty arranged by Captain Saris, in August, 1613, between the Emperor of Japan and King James, was a great deal more liberal than any ambassadors of to-day have been able to negotiate, and the freedom with which the Dutch and English passed and

repassed from one part of the country to the other, and the insight they obtained into the manners and customs of this singular people, were very great.* That commercial and

* *Treaty concluded between the Emperor of Japan and King James of Great Britain. August*, 1613.

"Art. 1.—We give free license to the subjects of the King of Great Britain, viz.: Sir Thomas Smith, Governor, and the Company of the East India Merchants and Adventurers, for ever safely to come into any of our ports of our Empire of Japan, with their ships and merchandise, without any hindrance to them or their goods; and to abide, buy, sell, and barter, according to their own manner with all nations; to tarry here as long as they think good, and to depart at their pleasure.

"Art. 2.—We grant unto them freedom of custom for all such merchandises as either now they have brought, or hereafter shall bring into our kingdoms, or shall from hence transport to any foreign part; and do authorise those ships that hereafter shall arrive and come from England to proceed to present sale of their commodities, without further coming or sending up to our court.

"Art. 3.—If any of their ships shall happen to be in danger of shipwreck, we will our subjects not only to assist them, but that such part of ship or goods as shall be saved be returned to their captain or Cape merchant, or their assigns. And that they shall or may build one house or more for themselves in any part of our empire where they shall think fittest, and at their pleasure.

"Art. 4.—If any of the English merchants or others shall depart this life within our dominions, the goods of the deceased shall remain at the disposal of the Cape merchant, and that all offences committed by them shall be punished by the said Cape merchant according to his discretion; and our laws to take no hold of their persons or goods.

"Art. 5.—We will that ye our subjects, trading with them for any of their commodities, pay them for the same, according to agreement, without delay, or return their wares again unto them.

"Art. 6.—For such commodities as they have now brought or shall hereafter bring, fitting for service and proper use, we will that no arrest be made thereof; but that the price be made with the Cape merchant, according as they may sell to others, and present payment upon the delivery of the goods.

"Art. 7.—If in discovery of other countries for trade, and return of their ships,

personal liberty was, however, very short-lived. The English factory was voluntarily abolished at Firando about 1620, a

FUSI-HAMA SEEN THROUGH THE RAIN.

year after the death of Will Adams, and the Dutch were ordered to occupy the vacated prison of Desima, in the

they shall need men or victuals, we will that ye our subjects furnish them for their money as their need shall require.

"Art. 8.—And that, without other passport, they shall and may set out upon the discovery of Jesso or any other part in or about our empire."

harbour of Nangasaki,—an imprisonment from which they may be said to have been only released by the perseverance and pertinaciousness of the Americans of our day, who almost insisted upon Japan being again opened to the intercourse of foreign nations.

Between those distant years 1600 and 1650, the opportunities of studying the Japanese people were very great, and we cannot accuse our friends the Dutch or our own countrymen of having failed to take advantage of them. The information they gleaned, however, is spread over such a vast area of print, and often given in such unpalatable forms, that the wheat is in most cases buried under a mountain of chaff, and it is only now that we are in a position to separate one from the other. There is hardly a prospect of our countrymen being able, for many years to come, to pass and repass as our forefathers did in the interior of Japan. It may never arrive, perhaps, that another Englishman shall be taken into royal favour, and be granted estates and rank like unto a lordship in England, with eighty or ninety retainers to support his rank, as was the case with William Adams, and we must therefore content ourselves, for the present, with the commercial advantages secured by the Earl of Elgin, and satisfy ourselves as to the condition and habits of the people of the interior of Japan as they were reported and observed by our forefathers. Happily for us, the aspect of an Asiatic nation does not change as rapidly as a state in Europe. A picture of any kingdom in our quarter of the globe drawn two hundred

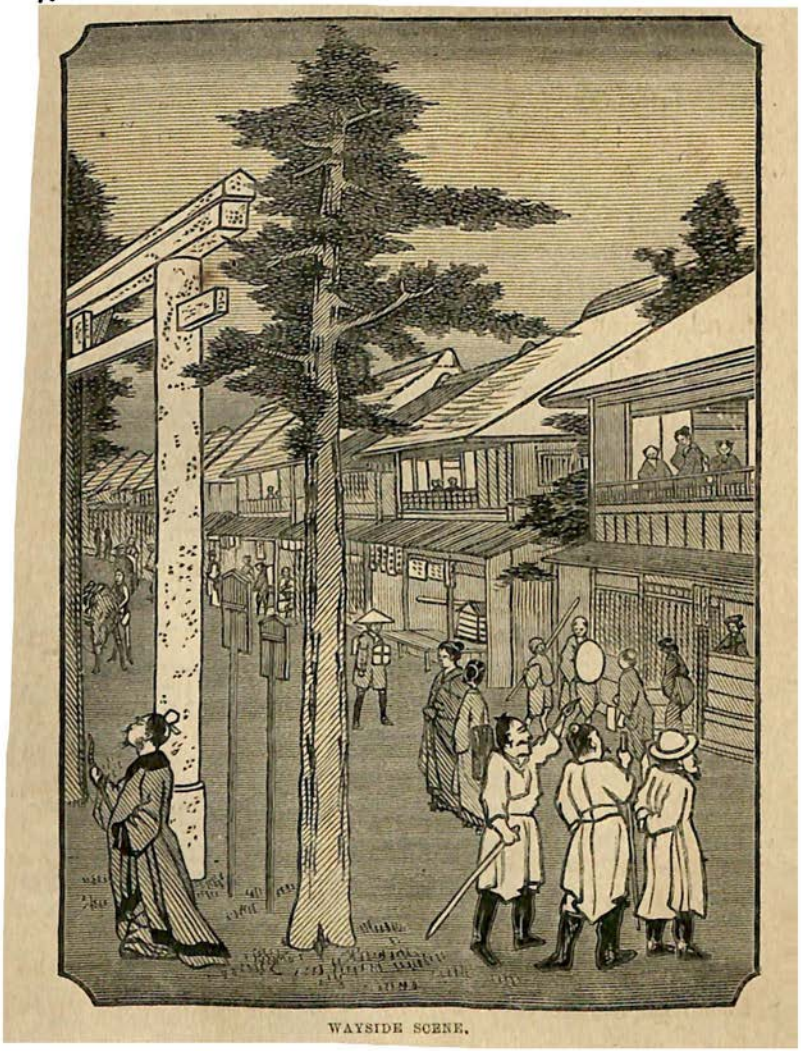
years ago would hardly be recognisable to-day; but it is not so in Japan, China, or many other places we could name. The Japanese of to-day are just the same people first seen by Pinto and praised by Xavier. The very cut of their garments is unchanged, they shave the tops of their heads and brush up their back hair as in the sixteenth century, and although their curiosity and skill are as great as when they imitated the petronels of their Portuguese visitors, and Toledo blades of the Spaniards, yet, strange as it may appear, they are in all other respects that same people of the Isles of the Day-dawn who repelled Kublai Khan's fleets and armies, and preferred heathen independence to the Christian vassalage of the Church of Rome.

Let us turn, therefore, to the people themselves, and leave the history of their foreign relations until we again take up the theme, in the modern visits to Japanese seaports. The first thing that strikes us is the strange coincidence between Marco Polo's report of 1295, and the accounts given in letters written by Adams three hundred years subsequently, of the general character and disposition of the Japanese. Will Adams dwells especially upon the good administration of the laws, and the order everywhere prevalent, as well as the courtesy and valour of the people. But it must not be supposed that writers pretend that the Japanese are a heaven-born race, free from the usual taints of frail mortality. Jealous of foreign interference, contented with their own laws and institutions, they at the same time, unlike the Chinamen, were full of curiosity as to the habits, manners,

arts and sciences of other nations. Every visitor to Japan was struck with their intellectual superiority over that of all other Easterns—their sound sense and powers of reasoning, their ready wit, keen perception, and great taste. The Jesuits, the soldiers and merchants of Europe, all bear testimony to their quickness in acquiring languages—their love for the exact as well as speculative sciences. The self-possession and self-respect so apparent in the present day amongst all classes was constantly noted. "Their rustics," said Ambassador Spex, "appear gentlemen by the side of our churls;" and it was remarked, in favourable contrast to the relative position of European classes of the community in those days, that, although the inferiors were most respectful to their superiors, their superiors were ever mindful of civility to those beneath them. Brave, prone to appeal to arms, and ruthless in battle, the Japanese exhibited at the same time a strange contrast in a hardened indifference to the sufferings of his fellow-creature: there was a total absence of all public charity for the relief of the aged, or diseased; infanticide was frequent; and there was an anomalous mixture of love and respect for women and the sanctity of the marriage tie, with legalised prostitution and public indecency. Then, as to-day, the stranger visiting a Japanese city was struck with the sad olio of civilisation and utter barbarism—of extreme delicacy and good taste, combined with grossness, and disregard of those common conventionalities which raise us above the beasts of the field. Take, for instance, the native illustration, that of a street in the

suburb of Yedo. Evening is setting in; travellers are unloading their horses and seeking a hostelry for the night. Mark the advanced condition of civilisation in the appearance of the dwellings, the neatness of the road, the trees allowed to grow as ornament and shade, the monumental arch erected to woman's virtue, or man's valour, the policeman in the distance; and, above all, the mingling of the sexes, so different to what is generally witnessed in the East; and, lastly, mine host, of the Hotel of Ten Thousand Centuries, praising the advantages of his establishment to the passing traveller. Then look at the reverse. The hotels are to be recognised by the courtesans, who both in the balconies and on the door-steps are inviting the passers-by. The three travellers in the fore-ground are criticising the poor girls, and debating at which house to put up. Neither parties seem in the least ashamed of the part they are performing. This is a truthful every-day scene, sadly illustrative of the remarks we have just made; and we fancy the admirers of the ancient civilisation of Greece and Rome will in Japan find a strong and living example of the standpoint to which those nations reached.

We have hundreds of sketches made by natives, illustrative of the wayside scenes of Japan. They were not drawn for the purpose of impressing foreigners with the comfort and well-to-do appearance of the people, any more than of the beauty of the scenery in the interior: yet there is in all a total absence of squalor, misery, or want. Could an artist, in most continental countries of Europe, we ask,



WAYSIDE SCENE.

sit down and sketch what was passing before him in a street or on a highway, without introducing figures from which one would turn with pity and loathing? Not only does it appear to be otherwise in Japan, but the remarks of European travellers in the interior confirm the fact to a very great degree. We do not in Japan find, as in India, the roadside leading to some great shrine or temple beset with starving disease-stricken pilgrims; neither, as Abbé Hûc has recently seen in China, do you meet with the tens of thousands, who formerly inhabited some prosperous province, forced by war or famine to leave their home, and marching in quest of sustenance—an army of starving creatures, more dangerous than wild beasts, more destructive, wherever they come, than locusts. Beggars there are in Japan; but it appears to be a lawful institution, not an unpleasant occupation, and kindly supported out of the surplus of their neighbours,—somewhat resembling the religious mendicant societies once so common in Europe. Yet the Japanese mendicants are original: the beggars do not trust to your mere pity to move your heart. If they be old, and fail to move you with the tale of their wants, they immediately, we are told, change from grief to gaiety, and either perform "coach-wheels," as the London gamin does, or tell you some witty tale, or sing a song,—in short, attest the fact that they are jolly beggars after all, and are ready to earn their penny if you will let them.

The mendicant priesthood of Fusi-hama, men who form their homes in lonely spots or dangerous places around the immortal shrine they worship, who give themselves up to

the contemplation of what they believe to be good and pure, praying ever for the sinning sons and daughters of Nipon, only mortify the flesh by abstaining considerably from ablutions and in forswearing razors; but they have cosy houses burrowed out amongst rocks and forest-covered ravines. Of course they are necromancers; so were our early monks; but these worthy Yamanboos—priests of the mountain—marry and bring up their families of mountaineers, of whom the young lady portions are notorious for their beauty, and would we could say for their virtue also. These children—at least the daughters of the mountain-priests—are born to beg, as mendicants, unless their beauty or talents induce the wealthier sons of the plains to raise them from their humble occupation to be the mistresses of their households. Under the term Bikuni, these pretty damsels travel in pairs, clothed in a dress not unlike that of a Sister of Charity, and frequenting the great routes which at certain seasons are thronged with pilgrims and travellers, these fair nuns are said to seldom beg in vain. The artful hood hides a laughing black eye and rosy cheek, the modest robe covers far too faultless and well-developed a form to pass unscathed where warm hearts are untrammelled, in a climate of Italian fervour, by those social rules which we have the Poet Laureate's authority for saying, "sin against the strength of youth."

More than that, love and religion in Japan have a certain mystic connection on which it were not well to dwell. It comes of old, old time, and is not altogether heathenish.

We all know how it crops up here and there, as Michelet tells us, amongst the mysteries of Rome, and even sober Protestantism cannot deny that the abodes of love, the Agapemones, are not confined to the neighbourhood of Taunton.

Fling not stones, therefore, most righteous ones, at the poor priestesses of Japan. We, at any rate, shall not, and insist upon the fair Bikuni being allowed to pass in peace until they shall be called to a better form of faith. For, after all, is it worse to touch your heart and sympathies with a pretty face, and a wild mountain chant, than to do so by exposing the sores of a Lazarus or the social horrors of a Magdalen? Bikuni, thou art as welcome to our mite as any beggar that ever idled upon the steps of St. Peter's, or cowered under the shade of Westminster.

The religious element enters so largely into the social condition of the Japanese people that we must allude to some of the different forms of faith and superstition, the distinction being but small. Recent visitors to Yedo, as well as those of olden time, have been struck with the superior condition of the priesthood there as compared with those of China. The attendance in the temples, the orderly and reverent performance of the religious services, all attest, that, in Japan, there is none of that sad stoical indifference to any faith, to overruling Providence, or a future state, which renders the Chinaman such a hopeless object of conversion to Christianity. The old Jesuits, who did not love the Japanese priesthood, acknowledged nevertheless that,

amongst the higher orders, there were men eloquently impressive in their preachings, and that their rhetoric, logic, as well as good manners and elegance of style—whether in conversation or writings—was not a little to be admired; in short, that the church of the devil—as they charitably styled the Japanese religion—was quite as well adapted to enlist the feelings and touch the senses of the lower orders as that of Rome.

There is much confusion as to the particular form of faith which might be considered the State religion of Japan; but, so far as we can glean, it appears to be a form of Buddhism modified by the Spiritualism of the ancient Sin-foo faith. We hear of many orders of priesthood, but those of the highest class are indubitably better educated, more intelligent, and far more respected than in China. They are spoken of as the encouragers of intellectual progress and education, and the natives give them credit as the introducers and inventors of many of their arts and sciences. Next to these stood formerly, and in all probability do still, three or more orders of secular clergy, somewhat resembling in character the knightly priesthood of ancient Europe. They are, however, said to be unpopular, on account of their turbulence, and of the bad odour they fell into in the sixteenth century, when, by way of checking the progress of Christianity and other innovations, they, to the number of thirty thousand, took up arms against their sovereign, and actually captured the spiritual capital. The Emperor Nobananga punished them with great severity; but his

assassination was accomplished by them, and the severities of Taiko-sama and his hostility to Christians arose from a fear of this same powerful confederacy of warlike priests. There are other sects of the priesthood, who rigidly abstain from all animal food, and spend a life of penance and mortification. Celibacy, though not general amongst the Japanese priests, is enforced amongst particular sects with severe penalties, incontinence being punished with death. The Ikkois take charge of certain temples, in which hospitality and kindness are carried out to a very profane extent; they never, says a scandalised father, trouble each other or dispute with the citizens upon questions of faith; their temples are the houses of good-fellowship, built in pleasant places; in short, these are the Friars Tuck of Japan. And lastly, we have the mountain priesthood of Yamanboos before mentioned. All these sects are more or less mendicant; and amongst these thrifty people a system of loans, not gifts, to the ministers of their Gods has been introduced, which is as perfectly unique as the conclusion they arrived at, to prevent a dispute about the colour of the Evil One bringing about a schism in the church. Each sect declared the said personage to be of a particular hue; all the churches were by the ears upon the subject, all the authorities at variance; the dispute became serious, and was referred to the Emperor; he solved the question with a wisdom worthy of Solomon. The devil he declared to be of all colours! and we suppose the harlequin attire of the Japanese policeman, as seen to-day, is to remind those who stray from the

paths of virtue and the law, that the representative of the many-coloured one will have them unless they mend their ways. But to return to the loans to the church; it is a standing law amongst the Japanese bonzes that he who lends them cash in this world will receive in the next world the capital and ten per cent. at simple interest. Bills of exchange payable hereafter are duly given to the lender, who carefully preserves them; and it is not unusual for dying persons to leave especial directions as to these bills. They are generally buried with the corpse, in order that principal and interest may be claimed in the other world, as well as to frighten off the Evil One, who is reputed to have a very natural horror of such I O U 's.

Another religious custom of a truly painful nature is spoken of by old writers upon Japan, and that is the self-sacrifice of the more enthusiastic priests in their desire to inherit more quickly the blessings of the future state. The neighbourhood of the great religious college of Conay * is especially mentioned as the scene of these suicides. The enthusiasts usually announced their intention of proceeding to the other world on a given day, and expressed a willingness to undertake any commissions for departed friends or relatives. They carefully noted down all such messages in books carried for the purpose, they loaded their wallets with

* This college of Conay appears to be close to the ancient city of Serunga, about half-way between Yedo and Osaca. It was visited in 1649 by a Dutch embassy, who say hither repair all the learned of Japan to dispute in theology and philosophy, and they appear to have witnessed some of these suicidal attempts to reac Paradise.

alms, and armed themselves with a sharp scythe, to clear the road of the many thorns and briars said to impede the paths to Paradise. Thus equipped, the poor creatures would embark on a deep lake in a small canoe; paddling out a short distance, they attached heavy weights to their bodies, and sprang into the water, whilst their admiring fraternity calmly regarded them as men much to be envied, and took care that the canoe should be burnt with fire, as a vessel too sacred to be ever defiled by being applied to less noble purposes.

CHAPTER VI.

A DAY'S JOURNEY BETWEEN YEDO AND MIACO—EVERY-DAY LIFE IN JAPAN.

We have sat long enough in-doors, making notes of Japan, historically, geographically, and politically speaking; we will now go into her streets and highways and study these people, as their native artist appears to do, by sketching from nature. I have not, it is true, seen in the flesh all the varied phases of Japanese life that are portrayed in the plates before me; but they agree so admirably with the notices of men like Saris, Cocks, Golowin, and Kæmpfer, that I may be forgiven for trying to reproduce the picture of every-day life by the way-sides of Japan. Those way-sides will, no doubt, be again one day open to the English traveller, they were once traversed by Christian priests, as well as by merchants and sailors, and are still visited, at periodical intervals, by the tribute-bearers from the long-oppressed Dutch factory of Nangasaki. In addition to what these various authorities relate, I shall avail myself of what passed under my observation in a recent visit to Yedo, Simoda, and Nangasaki, so as to endeavour to reproduce photographs of the Japan of to-day.

View of a Waterfall, seen between cloud and spray.

The spring has dawned on Nipon; the April sun has left the winter snows clinging to the crests of the mountain ranges around the matchless Fusi-hama, who, queen-like, rises clothed in glittering white and crowned with golden clouds from amidst a throng of jagged peaks and suspiciously picturesque craters. Beautiful valleys lie deeply embosomed amongst the many spurs which shoot out from this the mountain-heart of Japan. Our way has been toilsome over those rugged mountain-tops where the air is as sharp and bracing as on our own Highlands; we have been through dark dells, the theme of many a hobgoblin story, and the haunt of supposed magicians and attendant sprites. At dawn of day we passed along the side of a precipice, by a path which taxed even the nerve of our sure-footed carriers. That dawn of day in cloud-land was strangely, wonderfully beautiful, and in days to come the traveller to the mountains around the "Matchless One" of Nipon will see scenery, I believe, unmatched indeed for effect. Even the humble artists of that land become votaries of the beautiful, and in such efforts as the one annexed strive to do justice to the scenery. Their appreciation of the picturesque is far in advance, good souls, of their power of pencil, but our embryo Turner has striven hard to reproduce the combined effects of water, mountain, cloud, and spray, touched by the bright beams of a rising sun. The clouds, dense rolling masses of purple white and pink, hang overhead, serving to bring out in relief the cedar-clothed crags and mountain

precipice, down which dashes a beautiful fall of blue water, to be again lost in cloud and spray below. We descend into a vale through which the road leads between the two capitals of Yedo and Miaco. The fields are already green with the young upland rice and tender wheat plants. The gardens—and they are as numerous and as well kept as in England—are bright with many a flower seen in Europe. The peach and other old familiar fruit-trees bend under the weight of blossoms; streams leap downward through pretty copses already covered with tender leaflets. The fir-tree waves from the mountain crest overhead, the cedar overshadows the road, and the bamboo throws out its graceful plumes in the dell below. Asia and Europe have thus in this favoured land each contributed their share to make it rich in products conducive to the happiness of man—and man has done much; his industry gladdens us on every side, and as the soil is fertile, the valley may be said to be one great garden dotted with villages and neat cottages, whilst everywhere we see proofs of the redundancy of human life thronged into the space. Inhabitants and travellers, labourers, mendicants and priests, nobles and followers and ladies, children, jugglers and porters—who shall tell them all!—a human living kaleidoscope full of beauty and interest —are streaming along the road. We will travel a stage down it with the host of pilgrims who are going from Yedo to Yesi, the great shrine of the believers in Sin-fuh. The work is a good work, for they go there to be shrived of their sins—to obtain absolution, and by the toil and suffer-

ing undergone in the journey to give a living proof of the warmth of their faith.

Apart from the travellers, the road itself is worthy of notice. It runs in an excellent direction, so far as engineering skill is concerned, winds along many an ugly precipice, and crosses rapid mountain streams at places where they can be most conveniently bridged. The Taikoon's highway would compare with many of our best; it is drained at the sides, it is arched to allow the water to fall off, and, strangely enough, in many places it is macadamised. Trees have been carefully planted in situations where they would afford shade, and a mound of earth, of conical form, marks every mile passed, and tells the pilgrim how far he is distant from Nipon-bas, the great bridge of Yedo, the London Bridge of eastern land.

The traveller notices, by certain characters upon a post erected by the wayside, that he has passed out of one district or country into another, and that he is now under the authority of such a prince or such a governor. We desire local information as to that portion of Nipon through which we pass, and our servant, for a small sum, procures from an itinerant book-hawker an excellent guide-book, giving all the facts we require. We note that this Japanese institution, for imparting knowledge, is more than three centuries old, although the work is corrected and much improved by the increased modern knowledge of the art of wood-cutting. Perhaps Mr. Murray may smile and look forward to being able, before long, to give them a Japanese

guide-book, which shall excel that modest and cheap itinerary; but there are many things in which he will never surpass it, amongst others in cost, and the confidence with which the days are predicted upon which it shall be fortunate to travel.

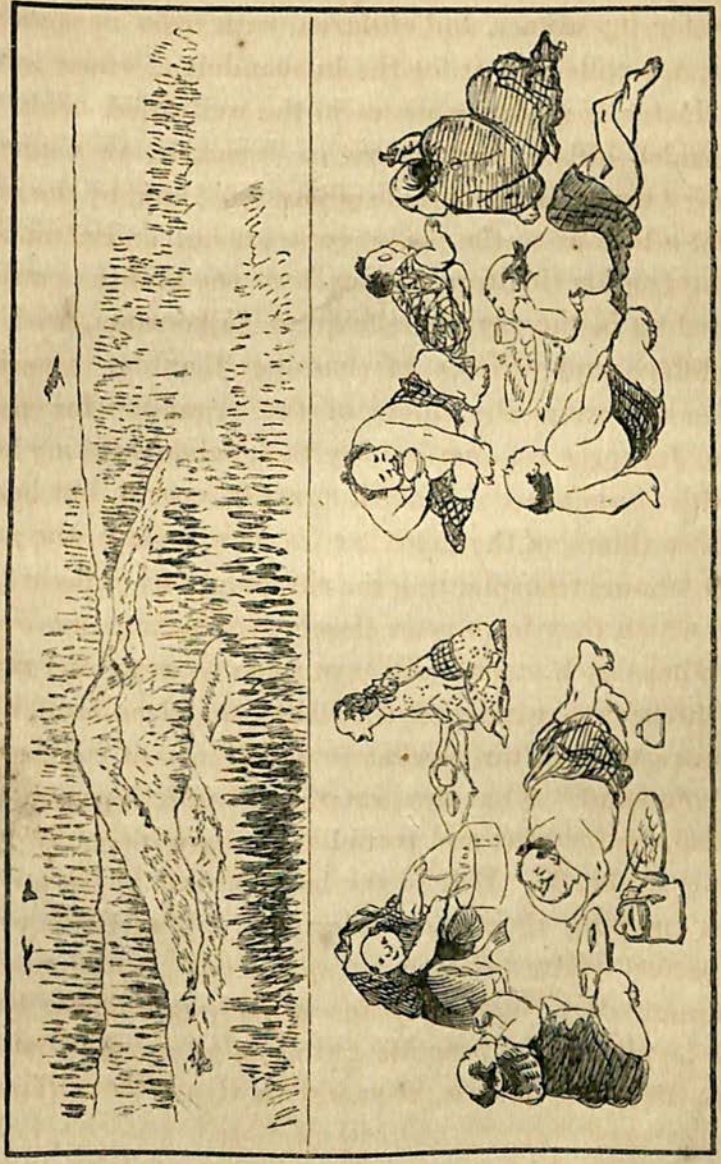
Our carriers rejoice in the fact of our luck being great upon the latter point, and we push on merrily; yet for a people who travel much they do not, it would appear, at first sight, study comfort. The sedans and palanquins are wretchedly uncomfortable, and attest the fact that they are rather adapted to mountain-paths, than to the broad and level roads of the plains. We may not at present stay to describe those vehicles, for we approach a post-house, and our bearers have to be exchanged and paid. There are, we find, no less than fifty-six of these establishments between Yedo and Miaco. The lords of the various manors are compelled by the authorities to maintain these places of refreshment for travellers; they are vastly superior to the caravanserais of the east, and relays of horses or porters are always ready at these Japanese post-houses, and must do all work at a regular fixed charge, ridiculously small, according to English notions. Another and still more onerous duty falls to these establishments, and that is the responsibility of forwarding all Imperial despatches between the two capitals, or from Yedo to any part of the empire. Runners are consequently ever ready to execute this task. Haste!—post haste!—is no idle injunction in Japan, where the despatches of the Taikoon or Mikado are concerned.

We see an instance of it whilst dismounting from our uncomfortable chair. A bell is heard! Out of the way!—out of the way! shouts a Japanese official, and two men hasten out of the house and look expectantly up the road; the crowd divides as if cleft with a sword, and at a swinging pace the couriers are seen approaching—a pair of stalwart bronze-hued fellows, strong of limb and sound of wind; their garments are few, and those few of the official black colour, stamped with the imperial crest, a white trefoil. One of the runners has a short bamboo-pole over his shoulder, and suspended from it a black lacquer despatch-box, formidable for its size, and we recognise the strength that has brought it to our feet so rapidly—no, not to our feet, for it never touches the ground. In a second it is slipped from the tired man's shoulder to that of the fresh runner, who starts down the road like a hare, his comrade's bell ringing to warn all travellers to make way. Thus the Taikoon's despatches speed through the land; if one man drops, the other takes up the burden. If a bridge is broken down they must swim the torrent. Haste!—post haste!—must be seen in Japan to be understood.

Whilst our morning meal is preparing, we stand under the overhanging porch, and look upon the throng in the road. "How clean it is!" is the first involuntary exclamation; even the ordinary dirt created by the passage of so many animals and men disappears as fast as it is created. They are great economists these Japanese, and they know how precious for the field is the dirt of the high-road; there is quite a com-

petition for it; women and children, with little baskets and brooms, are collecting it for the husbandman, whose intelligent industry is so conspicuous in the well-tilled fields and terrace-sided hills. Agriculture in Japan, as in China, is considered the most honourable of pursuits; and, by the many pictorial allusions to the peace, contentment, and abundance resulting from agricultural labours, we see that it is still as esteemed as in the days of the great Taiko-sama, who told the soldiers and priests of Europe that he especially viewed with favour the tillers of the ground; "for they," said the Japanese conqueror, "by their labours fill my kingdom with abundance." Naked, swarthy, coarse, but hearty, look those tillers of the fields, as we view them in the midst of their labours transplanting the rice plants from their damp bed, in which they have been closely reared, into more open order, where each stem shall have room to grow and ripen.* Mark the neat regularity of the drills, the cleanliness of the soil—not a weed or tare—what an abundance of labour must be at command. That the grateful soil fully repays farmer and labourer for time and trouble, we have proof in many a Japanese sketch. Behold the harvest-time of Nipon—the reapers enjoying their noon-tide meal. Was there ever a more perfect picture of animal enjoyment? Luke Stodges, the farmer's-boy, may pray for a belly-full of fat bacon, and to be allowed to pass life swinging on a gate; but even then, in that state of bliss, he would hardly excel our Japanese

* See page 18. Native Illustration of Agriculturists so employed.



REAPERS ENJOYING THEIR MEAL IN HARVEST-TIME.

friends in sensual delight; filled to distension with rice, a ripe harvest waving around them, smoking, drinking, and basking under a sun of Italian fervour. Nay, more, we question whether the contrast between the condition of the tramp, who begs food at the English farm-labourer's door, and the honest fellow himself, is as great as we have authority for saying must be the case in Japan, when we contemplate the lean and hungry creature who is holding out his platter to the well-fed woman on the left of our engraving. What a world of wit there is in this sketch—this native woodcut! The woman is taking off the lid of the well-filled saucepan, but before helping the mendicant she appeals half-jocularly to the only one of the party who has not done eating, whether he can spare any of the rice? That persevering feeder has distended his skin until we begin to feel anxiety as to its farther elasticity. The rest of the reapers have indeed fed, and are either smoking languidly, or drinking a little sakee to assist digestion. What perfect repose and contentment are visible in every figure! and how originally the artist attempts to convey to us the idea of a quivering heated state of the atmosphere among the standing crops, by representing the birds as if standing in the air—an optical delusion easily appreciated by travellers to hot countries. We look on such a scene, and many more, and ask ourselves, what is there we can give these of God's creatures that will make them happier? More calico, Manchester will suggest. Possibly Manchester may be right. But where there are no musquitoes, and

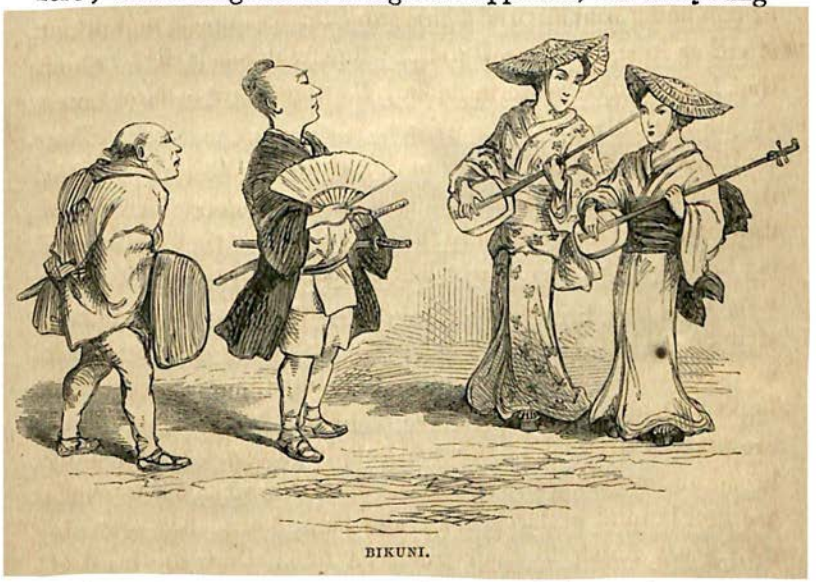
the sun is bearable, such an al fresco feast must be tolerable after all.

We turn from the field labourers who have diverted us from our village, and note how much the residents appear to live in public. The fronts of most of the houses open out into the street, and have no windows; the overhanging porch serving to shield the front apartment from rain or sun. We can, therefore, see all the various trades pursuing their callings; and between them and the itinerant vendors one need be at no loss for any articles of general use, of ornament, food, or raiment. The "cries" are as numerous as in the London of the olden time. They do not all, however, bawl out their various callings: some beat bits of stick together, others sound articles like Jews' harps, another beats a gong, another a drum. The fisherman, however, makes noise enough, and plants his load before us. Two huge tubs, suspended at either end of a bamboo, contain live fish and eels; and there is no question about their being "all alive, oh!" The liveliness of the fish brought to market is frequently illustrated by the native artists, and a facsimile of a laughable scene, supposed to arise from their being too lively, will be found at page 138. Fair mullet, how it wags its tail! gentle carp, how inquisitively it looks up at your gourmandising self! The eels, however, have evidently a presentiment of their fate, or from native bashfulness try to get under one another, and form an apparently inextricable knot. Poor miserables! Fancy if the Buddhist priest should be right after all—and he is very positive upon it, and can produce

any proof you require upon the subject—fancy, I say, good friend, our returning hereafter in some such piscine form, and think of our dumb sensations at such a moment as this, when the servant slips his hand into the tubs, selects a fat mullet, weighs, and decides upon purchasing it. No wonder the poor priest, believing in transmigration of souls, shudders and passes on, singing his hymn invoking humanity to all animate creatures, and wonders in his heart whether you are about to eat his long-departed mother! We, however, approve of fish being sold alive as a guarantee for freshness, and prefer it either in sight or smell to the "fine fresh mack'rill!" which that loud-lunged costermonger yells under our windows on a sweltering July day.

Itinerant British fish-vendors, avaunt! methinks I hear the guitar notes of the Japanese minne-singers. Yes, here they are; we passed them in the early dawn, as they were singing to some native noble who had camped by the roadside; they have followed, and are about to try their way to our purse-strings. They approach dancing, or rather waving their bodies, in cadence to their music, playing upon a guitar which looks uncommonly Portuguese or Spanish in its origin. They are prettily dressed in robes of simple patterns, confined by broad and ample scarfs round the waist. And as these scarfs are tied behind in large bows, and hang down, they serve to give great finish to their toilet—a finish that the want of many under-garments or crinoline might otherwise render remarkable. Their faces are pretty and arch; they are quite young, not more than fifteen or sixteen years old at the

utmost; and their glossy black hair is gathered under a broad hat, from under the rim of which they cast sly bewitching smiles, to give zest to their song, which is said to partake of the *double entendre;* and they exchange witty repartees with some fast young men who happen to be passing, in terms which send a shout of laughter through the hostelry. Not that laughter is confined to the moments when mirth may be excited by these glee-singers, for everybody seems to laugh here; and if laughter is a sign of happiness, old and young



BIKUNI.

are blessed enough. There, fair minstrels! speed on your way; I, for one, feel no wrath at your following the vocation which it has pleased God to call you to; and would no more

wish to cut off all your hair, put you into flannel petticoats, and imprison you in a penitentiary, than I should like to make your sempstress sisters change places with those of our great Babel.

We send for specimens of embroidery. This village, we are told, is famed for its handiwork in gold and silver thread upon rich silk and satin. A respectable woman shortly appears, accompanied by her husband. She was fair to look upon once upon a time; but Japanese husbands sacrifice their personal gratification, provided they can ensure that no man when looking upon their partners shall break the Tenth Commandment. The lady has pulled out her eye-brows, and blackened her teeth! The effect is most marvellous. You take one glance at her face, and at the black gulf which is scored across it, and you never again covet that man his wife, though you may the wares she exhibits. Poor soul! how good and self-sacrificing of her; yet it is a pity, for there is a grace and beauty about her voice, her hand, and manner which you cannot but admire. Another look at that mouth! and your eye involuntarily turns to the many pretty faces and white teeth in the street for refreshment and repose. But what taste, what skill and handiwork, we have in the tapestry and embroidery displayed. Where could these Japanese have learnt this art? It is not monstrous, heavy, overladen with ornament, or grotesque as in China; but delicate, refined, artistic, and such as we believe women's or men's work seldom, if ever, equalled. Gobelin never excelled it, Bayeux is hideous beside it, and the drawing and

shading of many of the pieces are so perfect, that they may be safely framed as pictures.

The vendors of embroidery are dismissed just as the porch is suddenly intruded upon by a gang of native jugglers and showmen surrounded by a troop of children, all whooping with delight, and as free, and evidently as well loved, as they would be in England. A man in the garb of a Japanese sailor, leads a large monkey which climbs up a pole, and seats itself on the summit, and, to the delight of the villagers, fans itself *à la Japonnaise*. The mountebank climbs on top of a pile of tea-cups, and stands on one foot on the summit of fragile crockery; the clown chaffs, and excites ridicule, and the peep-showman vaunts his marvels, and beseeches the patronage of your distinguished self.

Curious to know what a Japanese show may be like, you peep into one lens. Bravo!—a vivid, life-like scene—a Japanese earthquake, everything topsy-turvy, wreck, fire, death, and horror!—quite worth the fraction of a penny charged. The next one is hardly inferior in interest; a great battle against rebels. They are valiant, and stand in firm array, discharging clouds of arrows, which perpetually darken the sky; but nothing avails against duty and loyalty. Men clad in armour, lance in hand, are charging down, and it is evidently certain that the rebels will be exterminated, and the Divine Warrior's kingdom be still intact. We pass on to the next picture. Oh, fie! it cannot be; surely we were mistaken. No, by Jove! there is no doubt of it. A picture to be viewed by all, at which Holywell Street, and

assuredly Lord Campbell, would stand aghast! We express indignation; the showman laughs immoderately at our squeamishness, and everybody joins in the joke against us. Even the two nuns, who have just joined, and are humming a plaintive native air, raise their hoods and smile, coupling their mirth with sly remarks as to our mock modesty. How is this? we ask. Elsewhere in the East we are told that it is the exclusion of the female element from society which renders it, when unrestrained by ceremony or etiquette, so hideous, so unrefined. Here we have women everywhere; here is a nation which has attained a wonderful degree of civilisation and good government, a people possessing much delicacy, sensitiveness, and good feeling; yet in some points so coarse, so wanting in decency, as to shock the lowest Europeans.

Breakfast is announced, and we have another stage to travel to-day, so we hasten to it. Piles of white rice, surrounded with a multitude of small made dishes, in which fish generally prevails. A roasted rock-cod rises before us, a real *pièce-de-résistance*, flanked by many curious sauces, that would puzzle Soyer or Francatelli; all to the purpose, however, and grand incentives to feeding, if more than the bracing air of those mountains were necessary. Seizing our lacquer bowl and two chop-sticks, as well as a wooden spoon, we progress apace; pulling our fragments of fish, and dipping them into the sauces before eating. There is abundance of rice-beer, or sakee, the constant beverage of the jovial souls of Japan, as well as other stronger beve-

rages, made by vintners, cunning in such matters. In deference to our wish, tea is constantly supplied; a strong, coarse-flavoured description, which is much more like what we drink in England as good tea, than like anything met with in China. We are told that it is grown in most places where the hills are too steep for terrace cultivation; that it was imported from China, and has been acclimatised in Japan; that formerly a cup of tea in Miaco cost an English shilling, but that the herb now abounds on the eastern coast near the sea-side; indeed, so much so that they can sell it as an article of export. There is great consolation in these facts; who knows but that one day we too in Europe may learn, like these good people, to acclimatise the herb called tea. All the conditions of soil, climate, temperature, and locality, found on the east coast of Japan, are to be found repeated in parts of Europe, if not in the United Kingdom. Elated at the prospect of being rid of Chinese questions and Chinese difficulties, we hob and nob, in sakee, to our shadow, a Japanese functionary, who follows us and reports all we say and do to his masters. We pay our far from exorbitant bill, gravely confer little courtesies upon the fair handmaidens, amidst the cheers of the small boys, and shout to horse in good Saxon, which is readily understood by our eager-eyed attendants.

CHAPTER VII.

CONTINUATION OF THE JOURNEY, AND SCENES BY WAYSIDE.

If the native artist has faithfully portrayed horse-breaking in Japan in the accompanying sketch, the early training of those Nipon steeds must partake considerably of our English ideas of human education in the last century, the *fortiter in re* prevailing considerably over the *suaviter in modo*. And the system appears in both cases to have been successful in producing hard-mouthed steeds, and obstinate old parties; we in England suffer from the latter, the traveller in the Land of the Day-dawn has to encounter the former.

Our steeds, though spoilt in the mouth, are in other respects nice little animals, compactly built, hardy, and exhibiting considerable care in breeding, grooming, and stabling. But their appearance is most extraordinary. Two stood before us—one equipped purely *à la Japonnaise*, which I will first describe; for in the wilder parts of Japan, as well as amongst native travellers who have great distances to go, this is still the usual mode of conveyance, although not considered so honourable as being carried by porters in close boxes called norimas and cangos.

HORSE-BREAKING IN JAPAN.

The horse has reins of common blue cotton material, fitted to rather a cruel bit; the reins are split, and hang down on either side for men to lead it by. The animal's shoes are of plaited straw—a sort of sandal tied with strings round the lower part of the fetlock; the saddle consists of a simple wooden tree, fastened over a cloth; the saddle-tree has crupper and breast-straps, both highly necessary in so hilly a country. From either side of the saddle-tree hang down two leather flaps. Our servants rush at the poor steed, carrying two huge lacquered boxes, each half as long as the animal; they strap the boxes together in such a way that they hang suspended over the saddle against the flanks of the horse, and the two leather flaps before mentioned serve to prevent them rubbing through its ribs. Another trunk is now brought, and placed across the saddle-tree, and partially secured to it. The traveller's sleeping mat and padded quilt are now spread over all, and tied here and there to boxes, flaps, and saddle-tree. Poor Rosinante looks very like the hobby-horse of an ancient "mysterie"—merely a head, tail, and a deal of drapery.

The traveller now mounts, going up, as Mr. Rarey has at last discovered to be the proper way, straight over the shoulder. Our Japanese attendant, however, in doing so, looks much more like an old lady getting up into a four-post bed, than to Alexander mounting his Bucephalus. Balancing himself carefully on the top of the pile of boxes, and placing his legs where he can find room, our friend now commences to stow away in sundry holes and corners, or to

tie to divers strings, an appalling number of articles: yet they are all necessary. First comes the lanthorn; it hangs prominently to the bows, so to speak, of this animated ship. On it our arms or crest have been duly emblazoned. By night there must be a light in it; and whether by night or by day, it announces our rank and dignity to the authorities, police, or fellow-travellers. Then there is a string of the copper coin of the country, far too cumbrous for the pocket; a clothes-brush and fly-flap; a paper waterproof coat; a broad-brimmed tile for heavy rain or strong sunlight; and, lastly, a bundle of spare straw shoes for the horse. Thus equipped, with two men to lead, and two more on either side to assist him in preserving his balance, our Japanese friend signs that he is ready. We therefore approach the other animal, which at a short distance looks as if it was just ready to take part in a deadly tilt in Front-de-Bœuf's castle.

Our horse looks warlike enough, but what shall I say of the one of a Japanese noble just arrived? It is indeed a gorgeous creature; its headstall richly ornamented with beautiful specimens of Japanese skill and taste in casting, chasing, and inlaying in copper and bronze, the leather perfectly covered with these ornaments. The frontlet has a golden or gilt horn projecting. The mane is carefully plaited, and worked in with gold and silver as well as silken threads. The saddle, which is a Japanese imitation in leather, lacquer, and inlaid bronze, of those in use amongst the Portuguese and Spaniards in the days of Albu-

querque, is a perfect work of art, and only excelled in workmanship, weight, and value by the huge stirrups. The reins are of silk; a rich scarlet net of the same material hangs over the animal's shoulders and crupper. The saddle-cloth is a leopard's skin; and lastly, as a perfect finish, the long switch tail is encased in a blue silk bag reaching nearly to the ground; whilst, instead of the shoes being of ordinary straw, they are made of cotton and silk interwoven. Not being either a noble or a prince, we are more modest in our show; but the profusion of ornaments and metal even on our steed's saddle, stirrups, and headstall, can only be equalled by the excessive discomfort, indeed pain, of riding far, except in armour, upon such mediæval saddlery.

It is time, however, to start; our norimas or palanquins follow ready for use when the sun is higher; the stout porters shoulder the luggage; and away we go. Our attendants, porters, and others in the hostelry, had been most careful to appear in their liveries, consisting of simple blue cotton shirt and trousers, on which a crest or design was stamped here and there; but on the road it was amusing to see how they stripped to their work, and tucked up their trews, showing more flesh than even Lord Lovaine would be inclined to admit in the Royal Academy, much less on a highway. As everybody in Japan appeared to be too well bred to notice what we might have otherwise considered indelicate, we held our peace; yet the contrast between the nigh naked porters and some of the well-dressed, luxuriously equipped parties met on the road was very strange.

The Japanese noble or gentleman represented the height of refinement; but his porter or retainer struck one as the embodiment of sensual life—rough, coarse, careless, and fearless. They were well cared for, so far as food went, and that seemed everything to them. I could not help wondering whether our English serfs, or even the retainers of feudal times, were any better. I strongly suspect not. England of the Tudors must have been very like the Japan of to-day. The coarse animal enjoyments of the lower classes in Japan are favourite subjects for the pencils of their artists, some of whom appear to desire to correct this vice by broad exaggerations and Punch-like sketches. Take, for instance, the one which is wittily entitled "How Soldiers are fed in Nipon!" Were ever soldiers so fattened up, ever so well entertained? Sigh, ye Guardsmen! Your labours, in spite of all the Line may say, consist of something more than merely preparing your mess, devouring it, and then sitting down to promote digestion, and using a fan to cool yourselves. And whatever may have been the experiences of the European soldier or sailor as to the rapid expansion of his body under the effects of good food after short rations, we do not remember to have heard of anything, either in poetry, prose, or illustration, similar to the scene portrayed at the end of this chapter of the Japanese troops arming, after a sojourn in some Capua of rice, fish, and sakee.

On the other hand, if we turn from these coarse, gross retainers, to the children, whether boys or girls, who are

"HOW SOLDIERS ARE FED IN NIPON!"

playing by the roadside in the villages, we are struck with their beauty, independence, and the care evidently bestowed upon them. The majority have not, it is true, much clothing to boast of, as they play round the strangers; but there is a perfect ease about their manners, which proves that they know no one will hurt them. We are told that the numerous charms hung about them are to ward off the "evil eye"—rather a necessary precaution, when we see the little innocents in close contact with vice in its most rampant form, or such a scene as that before us.

Under a porch, and in an angle by the side of their house, a man and his wife are enjoying a tub of warm water in the open air. He is seated on the rim of the tub with his legs in the water; his wife, a fine buxom young woman, is busy with a bundle of flax, instead of a sponge, rubbing down his back: both are just as they came into the world, and evidently as indifferent to their neighbours as their neighbours are to them. Everyone treats it as a matter of course, yet it is contrary to our ideas of propriety, and we do not like seeing children in the neighbourhood, but so it is.

The boys (we are told) are not left to run about the streets until they grow into men. About seven years of age they are taken in hand by their fathers, or hired masters; hardihood, obedience, and skill in the use of arms are steadily inculcated. They are kept away from women, even mothers or sisters, for they are supposed to only render the boys effeminate, and the best schools or colleges are situated in lonely

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unfrequented places. A knowledge of reading and writing is very general amongst these people, more so we fear than in England, and the gentry take care to finish the education of their sons by severe training in all their forms of etiquette, and above all in their code of honour, the sum of which is, that suicide, or "the happy despatch," by cutting open the stomach, absolves a gentleman from all blame; and if he misconduct himself, or fail in his duty to the state, he may, by self-destruction, save family and connection from shame, and his property from confiscation.

BOYS ROLLING SNOW-BALL.

Thoroughly drilled and schooled into this idea, impressed with a deep sense of obedience, the Japanese boy is then put into the world to play his part, and we are not therefore astonished to find that, one day, his ruler can restrain him from gratifying his eager curiosity to see us, by simply stretching a piece of packthread across the end of a street full of a thousand excited creatures; or that, next day, if

required to do so, he will cut up a European—nay, more, if he be a retainer, at the command of his immediate chief, attack anyone, at any personal risk or cost, be he Taikoon, Mikado, or prince.

The future of the Japanese girl playing at our stirrup is far less certain; she has an important part to play, but it is a fearful lottery with her if she be of humble extraction. Those poor girls in the tea-houses, the women in the temples, the attendants in the public gardens, the ranks of Bikuni, have all to be filled up from the middle and lower classes. They may become famous in Japanese history, for Japanese history recognises its Aspasias, as Greece and Egypt did of old. They may, by their wit or beauty, win the hearts of wealthy men, who will take them for wives, and thus rescue them from their wretched lot. But in Japan, as in Europe, there is a wide, wide difference between the high and low of womankind, though equally gentle, though equally lovely. We have told of the Bikuni, for whom we shall claim the character given them by one whose heart was in the right place; he generously said, "They are as great beauties as one shall see in Japan, yet their behaviour, to all appearance, is modest and free, neither too bold and loose, nor dejected and mean." The poor girls in the hotels or tea-houses we need not dwell upon; their counterparts are found in all lands.

The opposite extreme of the social scale is proportionately refined. The child of the nobleman—a sketch of one is given in the first leaf of this work—is an example of the

luxury of those classes. A face of classical beauty, according to Japanese notions, combined with great modesty of expression, black hair turned up and ornamented with long gold pins and scarlet crape flowers, an outer robe of the most costly silk, embroidered in gold and confined at the waist by a scarf, upon which the highest female art has been expended in ornament, and tied in a large bow behind, the ends flowing over a long train formed by seven or eight silk petticoats, each longer and richer than the other. A sailor may pry no farther into the mysteries of female finery! She must be accomplished in music, embroidery, singing, and, above all, in skilfully improvising verses for the delectation of her future lord. Duty, a bundle of keys, weekly accounts, and good housewifery are all very well. They are expected—the Japanese gentleman requires all that; but he wishes, nay, insists upon the marriage-yoke being entwined with roses and padded with the softest silk,—it must not chafe; if it does, off he goes to his club, or, what is nearly as bad, his tea-house. The law allows him to do so, and is he not lord of the land? The consequence is, that Japanese ladies are very accomplished, very beautiful, and bear high characters in all that constitutes charming women; and their admirers, touched with their many attractions, declare in Eastern metaphor, that for such love as theirs the world were indeed well lost.

These lovely creatures do sometimes confer their hands and hearts upon love-lorn swains, and all we pray is that it may never be our lot, like "my Lord Brockhurst," to be

popped down in a palanquin on the dusty highway, because we happen to meet such a royal lady proceeding to meet her future spouse, and have to sit in dust and heat for three long hours whilst her array passes on its way. A proud pageant must be such a cavalcade as he describes,—attendants on generous steeds, all richly appareled, emblazoned saddles, bridles studded with precious metals, and a body-guard armed with bows and arrows, pikes and muskets;- ladies of honour seated in chariots drawn by oxen and horses, adorned with gilded chains and led by numerous lacqueys; the chariots glittering with richest lacquer and painting, the wheels inlaid with mother-of-pearl so as to reflect the sunlight. A royal wedding in Japan must indeed be a brave show! It is possible that, in the present day, there is less pomp and more good sense in royal or princely progresses in Japan, for, so far as our own observation went, there was a singular absence of anything approaching to mere show. Even in Yedo, although great pomp and ceremony were insisted upon in all that related to official or royal affairs, yet, as a general rule, looking up or down the most crowded street, the traveller would be struck with the quiet colours which prevailed in the dress of the people—especially in the men—who were invariably clothed in blue or black, plain or checked, with one exception, and that was in the policemen. They were attired like harlequins, why or wherefore, except to give notice of their presence, we did not learn. The policemen had no arms, except an iron spike about four feet long, with

a number of loose rings in a loop at the end, which, jingling together like the alarum of a rattlesnake, warned the unprepared that the representative of the law was at hand. In spite of all these representatives of the law, and of the order by which a crowd was sometimes kept from annoying us, or impeding our progress; in spite of the arrangement by which, in every town or large village, a series of barriers occurred at every two or three hundred yards, with two headboroughs in each space, so as to suddenly shut off the escape of a criminal, or to prevent the rapid extension of tumult, there was a sense of insecurity arising from the constant presence of armed men, and the fact that every nobleman, and especially the great princes, had in their pay vast bodies of retainers, ready to perform any act of violence if their chief only assumed the responsibility of giving the order.

The Japanese government cannot possibly be stronger than that of England used to be when each baron had his own armed retainers, or when every free man and noble walked about with a sword by his side. They are no better, and we believe no worse, and until the Japanese generally disarm, it would, we opine, be as well for our travellers in Japan to be armed likewise. A drunken retainer will be less likely to assail a European when he sees him ready to defend himself, and it is not likely that we should become the assailants.

Every Japanese gentleman carries two swords, one somewhat longer than the other, and in the hilt of one of them is

inserted a sharp dagger, which still remains in his hand, supposing the other weapons fail him. These swords are never parted with; even when seated one is still kept in the belt, the other laid down by the side. The value of these weapons is sometimes enormous, and no foreigner may purchase them without the consent of the authorities, a jealousy said to arise from a belief that Japanese valour and Japanese steel go together. The old Spanish motto upon Toledo blades, "Draw me not without reason; sheathe me not without honour," has a practical exemplification in Japan. They dislike drawing their swords for mere exhibition: "it was not good to look upon naked swords amongst friends," as one native remarked at Yedo. This feeling arose from no nervous squeamishness, but rather from a deep sense of the sad frequency of appeals to the sword, and because none of them knew how soon the edge of the sword would be their sharp bridge to another state of existence. Indeed, whilst this work has been going through the press, news has reached us of a recent appeal to arms in that fair city of Yedo. A hostile prince directed his retainers to cut off one who is at present Regent to the young Taikoon. They failed, although they wounded the Regent, in consequence of the devotion of his own guard. The assailants fled, followed by the Imperial forces. A few only escaped, and such was the desperate valour of these men that, as any one of the retreating party fell through wounds or fatigue, their comrades decapitated them in order that no evidence should be forthcoming to inculpate their chief! The next stage in the tragedy is the

"happy despatch" of the unsuccessful nobles, and all this in 1859. How very horrid and barbarous, some may say. We reply, go read the History of England, and say how long it is since we emerged from that condition; and remember we were Christians; these people are not.

HEAD OF A FELON, AND EXECUTIONER DECLARING HIS CRIME.—A MASQUERADE.

There used to be some years ago in Japan a curious custom, which it is possible has in this day ceased to be practised—for even in the East there is a progress—it illustrated

the native valour and generous courage of these people perhaps more strongly than what we have just seen occur in Yedo. When a nobleman had committed a crime worthy of death, he might, if he pleased, instead of disembowelling himself, call upon all his kith and kin to assemble in his abode, and endeavour to hold it by force of arms against the Imperial forces. The fight generally terminated in a great slaughter, yet, strange to say, any of his kinsmen who failed, when invited, to share in such a *mêlée* were considered to be dishonoured.

But let us pass on. The sun has risen high, it is rather warm and dusty, and the demi-peak saddle lined with brass not the most pleasant of seats. We call the norima-men to bring that Japanese palanquin within reach, and take refuge in it. It looks heavy, but it is not so, and is constructed of very thin panels of cedar, varnished over. The interior is very comfortably furnished, and allows one to lie down with much ease. The pole of the norima is the important feature: it passes over the roof, and by its length and massive proportions our rank is proclaimed. A small humble individual, a short, light pole; a great important personage, a long ponderous one. The laws are very strict upon this head, as far as men are concerned; but the laws are gallant, and allow considerable licence to ladies upon the question of poles to their norimas. Huge as the pole looks, Kæmpfer assures us the materials of which it is artfully constructed, thin slabs of pine or cedar, and much glue, deprive it of its apparent weight. The porters do not appear to heed either

it or our weight, and go off at a sharp pace. If we were a Japanese prince, our pole would only rest on the palms of the men's hands, and they would strut through all the towns in a very quaint, coxcomb-like manner; not being a prince, we are shouldered, and our bearers walk like human beings. We thank Providence, however, that we are sufficiently exalted to be allowed a norima, instead of having to travel in the smaller conveyance called a cango—a sort of a bird-cage open at the sides, which by far the major portion of the people we meet on the roads are compelled to be satisfied with. We know what it is to be cramped up in a cango, because in scaling the two or three high ranges of mountain-land between Yedo and Miaco, people of all grades must get into them, in consequence of the steepness and danger of the mountain paths. How those poor women and men can sit there in the dust, sun, rain, or wind, cramped up with their knees and chins together, through some of the terrible long journeys they have to make, is a perfect mystery. They must be a patient, long-suffering race, or they would have rebelled against it, for by the laws they must travel. Every noble and every official passes annually with all his relatives or retainers to and from the capital. Every governorship, judgeship, and generalship is in duplicate, one at court, the other in office; they relieve each other annually. Then all the shrines have to be visited, and pilgrimages done—in fact, everybody seems to travel more or less in Japan, yet they travel very uncomfortably as far as the vehicles are concerned.

We approach one of the famous fords in Japan, and there are many such places on the road between Yedo and Miaco. They are occasioned by the great impetuosity of the rivers, as well as the sudden floods to which the streams are subjected, owing to the lofty character of their sources and the short distance between their fountain-heads in the mountains and the sea. Heavy rains in the highlands, or sudden thaws, swell these streams into wide, fierce rivers, to be as quickly reduced into brawling rapids. Dipping suddenly into a flat plain of some width, we find ourselves traversing grounds subjected to inundation, and soon stand on the banks of the ford—now reduced to a dozen small detached streams, in some places waist-deep, rushing down between banks of sand and pebbles. We now hand ourselves over, body and baggage, to the charge of a body of stout athletic men, whose especial vocation it is to pass goods and travellers across such places. They are bred to their calling, one which calls for great skill and courage; and, poor fellows, they are held responsible for the lives of those they undertake to ferry across the treacherous Ogingawa. We should despair of being able with pen to convey to the reader a correct idea of the scene at one of these ferries, if we had not been able to enlist the pencil of a Yedo artist, in the coloured plate annexed. It will bear close inspection, though the pencil was a humble one. The river has shrunk to its lowest, yet the width of the bed it sometimes covers explains to us at once why, in a land of wooden bridges, it is impossible to span it. Away in the distance the hills are seen still touched with the rich

colouring of a setting sun. Evening comes; the ferrymen may not linger. A great personage and retinue are actually engaged in the passage across. Some of the party stand on *terra firma*. An unpainted norima or palanquin, used by the better classes, leads the van; a person uncomfortably seated on a simple trestle follows, borne by six men; then two officers bearing standards, or insignia of rank. Then a grand norima, probably that of a lady of rank. She has judiciously shut up the windows, for a crowd of lusty porters in Adam's own attire surround the precious burden. A cango, or chair with an attendant doubled up in it, comes next, and then more persons squatted on trestles, a ticklish seat when the stream runs strong, or the porters stagger, but still preferable to the pick-a-back modes of transit which some of the travellers are reduced to. The scene in the foreground tells its own tale. A fresh party has just arrived; the grandee is giving instructions to his servants. The standard-bearers just starting, the porters are hastily packing the luggage on trestles, and the norimas will soon be shouldered by the stout-limbed ferrymen. This may be supposed to be ourselves, and that we eventually cross in safety and go on our way rejoicing.

After another short stage in our norima, the general halt is sounded; another post-house receives us, another meal is discussed, and following the general custom of those around us, we all go off for an afternoon's nap. It is very un-English this custom of sleeping away two hours of the afternoon; the Chinamen don't do it, yet everyone appeared to go to sleep

Retinue of a Grandee crossing a Ford.

in Yedo during the afternoon. Possibly the custom has been derived from the old Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch visitors: it is not the only point in which we recognise a grafting of European habits on to native ones, and it will be deeply interesting for future visitors to this strange people to note how far their ancient love for European customs has allowed those customs to survive the subsequent persecution and expulsion of the foreigner.

Nigh unto our resting-place a monastery of blind devotees, or monks, or the shrine of some beneficent god or goddess would, in all probability, be found; and it was charming to observe how lively was the faith of these poor islanders, and how well their clergy seemed to be supported, and how rich their temples were in such wealth as the land possessed. In former days, when more of the interior was known, European visitors were struck with the vast wealth of some of these edifices, and their descriptions, supported by Japanese authorities, are truly marvellous. For instance, in the great temple of Miàco, the Spanish ambassador, Don Rodriguez de Vivero, saw such an accumulation of wealth, such a profusion of human wit and ingenuity, as perfectly put to blush all the cathedrals of Europe. The great bell of that temple weighed alone two million and a quarter Dutch pounds, and so huge was the principal idol—a bronze one—that one of the ambassador's suite could not embrace the thumb with both hands; 100,000 men were at work on the edifice, and had been for some time, and yet it was still incomplete. Satan, as the worthy Don suggests, could not have invented a

shorter way of impoverishing the national exchequer than in the construction of such temples and such idols. In all probability, wars and earthquakes have swept away many of these ancient and wealthy temples; but we shall be curious to read the report of the first traveller who visits Miaco in the present day, and is allowed to see it, and tell us what he has seen. Apart from their wealthy shrines, there are shrines in Japan famous for miracles performed, which would put many to the blush nearer Rome. There is, for instance, at Firando, near our old trading port, a temple where ladies in a certain condition go to pray that they may be blest with male children. "Oh, give me a boy, great goddess!" they cry, "and I'll bear him cheerfully even though he be a big one!" On Kiu-siu there is another shrine, over a spot where formerly stood a crucifix; the inexhaustible wood of which, if swallowed in a powder, always led to the detection of a thief, by causing him to swell to an inordinate size. Then there are, as in all Buddhist lands, hospitals for dumb creatures, of which the waggish Japanese tell many good stories. Especially of that one for dogs, founded by a crazy Taikoon; and how, one hot day, two honest porters were carrying to the cemetery the carcase of a brute. "Friend," quoth one, as they toiled up the hill-side, "this is rascally work for human beings. Hang the Taikoon and his love for dogs! I wish he was here to carry about dead ones!' "Hush," replied his comrade, '"we are born to obey, and' Taikoons to do as they please. Let us only thank Buddha that our ruler did not take it into his head to make a hos-

pital for horses! Fancy what it would have been to carry one of them to its grave on such a day!"

Thus, there is no lack of interest, wit, and fun, even by the wayside in Japan, and without taking our readers for another day's journey, I think enough has been said to excite the curiosity of future adventurous travellers, and to encourage them to open to our modern ken this strange land and wonderful people, who, believe me, in spite of their hot tempers and sharp swords, are anything but savages, and whose country, although it has no butchers' shops whither to send for your pound of beef-steaks or mutton-chops, and although it is occasionally shaken by earthquakes, is a p lea sant place of sojourn notwithstanding.

"SOLDIERS ARMING THEMSELVES AFTER PEACE."

CHAPTER VIII.

SUMMARY OF THE OPENING UP THE JAPANESE EMPIRE TO EUROPEAN INTERCOURSE IN THE PRESENT DAY.

THE English intercourse with Japan, which opened under the auspices of William Adams, in 1613, as the favourite of the European Iyeyas, was, for many causes which it is unnecessary to enter into, very short-lived. Adams died in 1619 or 1620, a *détenu* in Japan, although allowed to take service in the East India Company's factory in Firando;* and, three years afterwards, the Company's factor withdrew. The trade with Japan then reverted entirely into the hands of the Dutch, and they from that time forth successfully preserved the monopoly, materially assisted in their policy by that of the Imperial government, who saw no safety or peace for Japan, except in a rigid system of exclusion from all direct communication with foreign nations and foreign creeds. For two centuries this prohibition was faithfully and impartially adhered to, in spite of a weak effort on the part of England, in the reign of Charles II., and of some subsequent ones under the auspices of Sir Stamford Raffles, then Governor of Java, as well as by the Russians, who, as early as the year 1792,

* See "Memorials of Japan," edited for the Hakluyt Society, by Thomas Rundall, Esq.

tried to obtain a footing in Japan. But to all there was one reply :—"Formerly our empire had communication with several nations, but experience has caused us to adopt the opposite course. It is not permitted unto the Japanese to trade abroad, nor can foreigners enter our country."

When the East India Company monopoly of the trade to China was abrogated, a wonderful expansion of commerce between that country and Europe, as well as America, immediately ensued. The ten years which elapsed between 1830 and 1840 did more to open up our knowledge of the countries lying beyond the Indian Ocean, than the previous century had done; and this progress was still further stimulated by the development of trade which followed the measures adopted by Great Britain to resent the insults of Chinese officials, in 1840-41-42. Our missionaries, and the merchants, labouring in China, then found themselves at Shanghai, only a few hundred miles from another country, named Japan, once as famous for its profitable trade as they well knew China to be, and inhabited by a race reputed to have been once upon a time nigh all Christians. It was natural both should turn a longing eye to such a quarter, but the enterprise of either party was but lukewarm. We Protestants are but indifferent missionaries; the Romanists had quite enough to do to meet the vast demand upon their missions in China; and our merchants soon found ample employment for all available capital in the silks and teas of the Central Land. The efforts, therefore, of those sections of the English and American communities in China were

all ill-digested, feverish, and exhibited no perseverance or determination; whilst the British officials, though evidently hankering after a trade with Japan, did nothing effective towards the desired end.

Between 1840 and 1850, however, the attention of European nations was attracted to the shores and islands of both the North and Pacific Oceans, for Great Britain had there supinely submitted to a double insult in having

BOYS FEEDING STORKS.

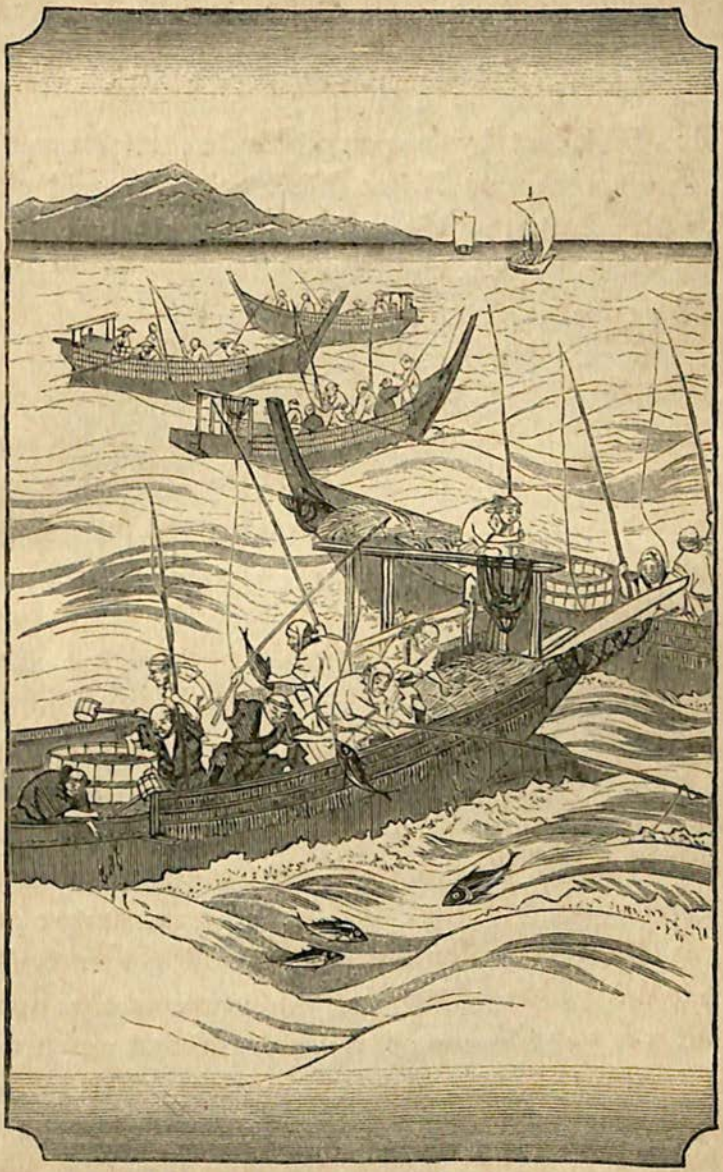
her flag and subjects trampled on by Frenchmen in the Protestantised island of Otaheite; and being bullied and cajoled out of her indubitable territories in Oregon and on the banks of the Columbia river, by the cabinet of Washing-

ton. France and America simultaneously discovered that that great South Sea, that hemisphere of water dotted with rich islands, and washing the shores of Asia and America, was likely to play before long an important part in the history of the world. France and America acted; England, represented by a set of old parties who thought that her dominion, won by the blood and toil of our ancestors, was a great deal too extensive, and, judging by their own feelings, had misgivings as to her present strength and future destiny, put on her spectacles, flourished her mops, and looked on.

In 1846, the United States, with consummate audacity and skill, made a bold stroke for empire upon the shores of the Pacific. She had always maintained a large squadron in those seas, and exercised a high-handed influence over the wretched republics into which the American dominions of Spain had dwindled. England, thanks to having handed her magnificent provinces of Oregon and Vancouver, as well as that noble stream the Columbia, to the entire monopoly of the Hudson Bay Company, knew nothing of their value or resources; and the good-natured public appreciated about as much the geographical, commercial, or political importance of our position in the Pacific, as Englishmen usually do of anything off the map of Europe. Suffice it that, in one and the self-same year, we were cheated out of Oregon, and the Mexicans were robbed of the Californias, and by May, 1846, the United States stood with both feet upon the shores of the Pacific, the real mistress of the situation, over-

awing the puny states of South America upon the one hand, and on the other stretching out her right arm towards the rich and densely peopled countries lying on the Asiatic coasts of the same sea. With a political foresight which redounds in no small degree to the credit of the United States lawyer who then ruled the destinies of his country, President Polk did not sit down and bemoan, as our British statesmen now do, the extension of dominion, as a sign of weakness in the empire; but leaving California to become the great state it now is, he at once laid down the theory which is yet being developed, that the Pacific is the natural route of North America to China and the Indies!

At the same time that a powerful American fleet was concentrated in California to overawe and, if needs be, fight the petty British squadron under Rear-Admiral Sir George Seymour, should it interfere with his plans, Mr. President Polk contrived to have the line-of-battle ship Columbus, of ninety guns, and the Vincennes, of twenty-four guns, in the Gulf of Yedo. Had the American commodore possessed an equal share of Mr. Polk's zeal or energy, Japan would have been opened to American commerce on the self-same day that the stars and stripes were hoisted at Montery. The commodore did not succeed in Japan, but the genius of the man who directed that double movement was not the less great; and yet that was not all, for it was mainly through American influence that England then repudiated the sovereignty of the Sandwich group, the stepping-stone to Japan across the North Pacific Ocean,



FISHERMEN CATCHING BONETA, OR LARGE MACKEREL.

and entered with America and France into a convention guaranteeing the independence of those islands—that independence consisting in a thorough Americanising of the Sandwich Islanders by swarms of Yankee missionaries, one of whom soon became Prime Minister and actually ruler. Thus, with one foot on the eastern seaboard of the Pacific, and the other on Cook's famous discovery, the Sandwich group, America was ready to make another great stride for the commerce of the East, and Japan was her nearest point.* It was closed to her citizens and missionaries; it must be opened; and how steadily and consistently she worked to the point, and eventually succeeded! We do not blame her, but what we do find fault with is that spirit of cant which tries to persuade us that Commodore Biddle and his huge two-decker, or that Commodore Perry with a powerful squadron, breaking all Japanese laws which interdicted communication with foreigners, were representatives of mere Christian arguments; or, indeed, of moral and not material force. England has been called a bully for going to Tien-tsin and looking ugly at Pekin, in spite of the Emperor of China. Allow us to call attention to the mode in which America insisted upon visiting Japan in her equally secluded capital.

In 1853, President Fillmore, having beaten a very big drum, and talked a wonderful talk of philanthropy, science, trade, and revolvers, despatched from pious America a strong

* The Bonin Islands, lying between the Sandwich group and Japan, have likewise been claimed in support of these same views by the United States.

squadron under Commodore Perry, with a letter to the Taikoon at Yedo, assuring him of his unalterable friendship, and adding, with a keen eye to business, that "the great state of California produced sixty million dollars in gold every year, besides silver and precious stones," and guesses Japan and the United States might do a good stroke in trade, if the Taikoon would have no objection. In another paragraph, with that regard to the future which so distinguishes the policy of an American statesman, Mr. Fillmore requests that a port may be opened in a convenient part of Japan, for American steamships to touch at for coals and stores, in their voyages across the North Pacific! and winds up with a little oil for the troubled consciences of Philadelphia, by hoping that "the Almighty might have his Imperial Majesty, the Taikoon, in His great and holy keeping." The commodore delivered this letter, backed by a semi-threatening one, in which he advised the Taikoon to enter into a treaty and friendship with the United States, tells him that "the Japan seas will soon be covered with American vessels," and mildly adds that he designs, "*should it be necessary, to return to Yedo in the ensuing spring with a much larger force.*"

The presence of the commodore's vessel in the lower part of the Yedo caused, no doubt, considerable anxiety to the Taikoon and his council. They contrived, after two seasons of procrastination, and the usual amount of diplomatic delay, to get rid of Commodore Perry, having yielded a treaty, it is true, for there was no other way of getting rid

of him, but as little more as they possibly could. The Americans were to be allowed to visit the port of Simoda, near Cape Idsu, about eighty miles south of Yedo; but on the other hand, the commodore bound his countrymen to visit no other ports but Hakodadi, in Yesso, and the said port of Simoda, except through stress of weather. The Americans were to procure by barter or purchase such stores and provisions as might be necessary; but, to guard against the opening of trade, we find the following article cleverly introduced by the Japanese in Art. 6:—"If there be any other sort of goods wanted, or any business which shall require to be arranged, there shall be careful deliberation between the parties, in order to settle such matters." In fact, so far from the treaty being a commercial one, we see nothing in it to lead one to infer that they intended a relaxation of the Japanese commercial code by their convention with the commodore; but, on the other hand, there is no doubt that they conceded three important points:—

The right of American ships to touch at two places for refreshment; they guaranteed safety to life and property in the event of American ships being wrecked upon the coast of Japan; and, above all, that the United States might appoint a consul to live at Simoda.

This last concession was most important; it involved, in short, the re-opening of Japan to European intercourse; and, although we maintain that pressure was used, that America did carry her object out with a high hand, still we allow that it was a political necessity, and only laugh at her

when she gets up a pious whine upon the subject. A very able man was sent as consul at Simoda; not a diplomatist, but a plain honest-hearted gentleman, who rapidly won on the love and esteem of the native authorities; and it was, in the first place, due to the influence he obtained over the Taikoon at a time when the Taikoon and council in Yedo were agitated and alarmed by our second war in 1857, as well as the subsequent opportune arrival of Lord Elgin with a British squadron at Yedo in 1858, that America and England are to-day indebted for the re-establishment of commercial relations which already yield such profitable results.

Claims have been made by Holland for some degree of credit in re-opening Japan; we are not prepared to admit them, although we will allow, that when the Dutch saw the opening of Japan inevitable, they tried to get the credit of making the first commercial treaty. We have lately read that document, and may congratulate the merchants of England on not being hampered by Dutch notions of trade as antiquated as those decrees of Taiko-sama, which are at last subverted.

The Dutch treaty proposed in 1855—a scheme they wished the Taikoon to *consider the basis of all foreign intercourse*—was briefly as follows:—That all foreign nations should trade at Nangasaki, under the superintendence of the Governor of that place—a system analogous to the famous Hong Kong system of Canton, which was for many years the bane of our commerce with China; that the

Japanese should concede two places, one in Yesso Island! the other in the Linchotsen Archipelago! for the ships of friendly nations to visit for *refreshment* and *coaling* purposes! Thus the Japanese were advised to keep the foreigner from Japan Proper, and the two wildest and most remote portions of the empire were selected as those at which our ships were to touch. If we cannot, however, say much for the exertions of Holland in throwing open Japan to European knowledge, it is but just that we should bear witness to the ability with which the Dutch have prepared the native government officials for intercourse with us when it was inevitable. They have taught them to speak and write Dutch, as well as English; enlightened them on most European sciences; taught them to handle as well as build ships and steamers; shown them how to imitate many of our manufactures; given them a taste for mathematics and mechanics; and are now busy drilling them in all the mysteries of war, according to European notions—of all this Holland may well be proud.

As it is more than probable that the recent acts of dishonest traders in Japan have again revived a feeling of dislike to the foreigner in the open ports, and the reactionary party in Yedo may yet succeed in subverting the present treaty, it will be as well to describe the last scene in the opening of Japan.

During the summer of 1858, whilst the Allied forces were busy operating against the earthworks of Taku, and using what is called "moral force," in inducing the Court of Pekin

to open China, rumours were afloat that the Americans and Dutch, taking advantage of the general panic in Japan —incident to their neighbours' houses being on fire—were making great play, and it was generally known that in the smoke and flourish of the signature of the treaty of Tien-tsin, the American commodore in a huge United States' steamer, the Powhattan, had hurried to Simoda, or Yedo. It so happened that a yacht had been sent from England, which our naval commander-in-chief was ordered to present to the Taikoon of Japan, as an acknowledgment for the courtesy and good-nature with which he played the neutral in the Russian war. It struck Lord Elgin that the opportunity was a good one to try what could be done on behalf of Great Britain, who otherwise would have paid for roasting the chesnuts whilst others eat them. To Nangasaki in Kiu-siu we accordingly took him in H. M. frigate Furious. Our admiral arrived a few days afterwards with the yacht, and finding no one of sufficient rank to receive the present, it was sent round to Yedo, under the escort of Captain Barker, of the Retribution, and thither our ambassador cleverly decided upon going likewise. The intelligence gleaned at Nangasaki was interesting. It appeared that the Dutch resident, or chief factor, as well as the consul-general of the United States at Simoda, had been invited to Yedo, in consequence of their having, during the early part of 1857, made some representations on behalf of their respective states. But so far as the Dutch at Nangasaki knew of the result of these negotiations, there

was nothing cheering. They said that Mr. D. Curtis and Mr. Harris had been subsequently ordered back to their respective posts without any signature being appended to their treaties, and it seemed to be the general impression that the Mikado's party and the *parti prêtre* in Japan were decidedly hostile to any change in the system of seclusion, and the residents at Desima were of opinion that unless we really appeared off Yedo with the eighty British pendants then in Chinese waters, nothing would come of Lord Elgin's visit.

On the 10th of August, 1858, we arrived at Simoda, a port lying at the extreme of a rocky and highly volcanic promontory, projecting from the island of Nipon into the Eastern Sea. Here we found Mr. Harris, the American consul, in the greatest state of glee. He did, as we heard at Nangasaki, return to Simoda from Yedo empty-handed, but when in the depth of his chagrin Commodore Tatnall suddenly appeared with the news of the Allied successes at Tientsin, and the opening up of China, Mr. Harris saw his opportunity, hurried on board the war steamer, steamed up to within some fourteen miles of Yedo, hastened to the capital, and astonished them with his intelligence. Mr. Harris urged that it was better to yield a little willingly than perhaps to give much hereafter, and bringing his own personal influence to bear in various quarters, successfully carried his point, and within a very few days found himself back at Simoda, and the Powhattan steaming away with the first commercial treaty framed and signed in Japan since the year 1613. Thus our successes at Tien-tsin opened

not only China but Japan likewise. The history of the negotiations at Yedo are curious.

Directly the Allied expeditions of 1857 were known to be in Chinese waters, the Dutch and Americans took good care that its achievements, its force, and objects should be thoroughly appreciated by the Japanese authorities; and they accompanied their information with disinterested suggestions as to certain treaties which would avert similar proceedings from the Land of the Day-dawn. Agitated, bothered, seeing no end to these treaties (for ever since Commodore Perry's visit they had been incessantly pestered with conventions and treaties), the Taikoon listened patiently, but evidently doubted at first who was his real friend. The war rolled to Northern China; it was getting unpleasantly close, and seemed even more like war than what the Japanese had witnessed during the "hide-and-go-seek operations" against Russia. The Taikoon and Council at Yedo sent for Mr. D. Curtis from Nangasaki, and the American consul from Simoda. They were kept apart, negotiated with singly, watched, reported upon, and played off one against the other to a charming extent, yet with much kindness and courtesy, and Mr. Harris was especially honoured; he dwelt for six months in a house within the limits of the Imperial enclosure, and in the heart of Yedo. He lived at the imperial charge; and when some excitement arose from the mob being worked upon by a reactionary party, a strong guard was sent to patrol round his quarters, and made responsible for his safety. The prince of Bitsu

then held in the Imperial council a position somewhat akin to that of our Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Mr. Harris had frequent interviews with him, and found him an intelligent, well-informed nobleman. He was evidently fully aware that the time had arrived in which Japan must enter into relations with foreign nations. But he had two great difficulties to contend with. On the one hand, the prejudices of a powerful party in both council and state, who were opposed to any alteration of policy, and encouraged in their fears of the foreigner by the priesthood, who preserved a knowledge of the narrow escape they had from total annihilation at the hands of Xavier and his well-disciplined followers. The other anxiety of this enlightened prince and the progressionist party was, how to bring about the change without giving rise to tumult and rebellion within their borders from squabbles and differences with foreigners along the seaboard, which, fanned by one functionary and another, would lead Japan into the same sad embroglio as China had been in since she had swerved from the great Confucian maxim: "Happy those who depart not from the wisdom of their ancestors."

During the winter of 1857-58, these negotiations went on; and whether it was the obstructionists were too powerful, or that the first alarm had passed off, it is impossible to say. At any rate, after acknowledging the justice of the grounds upon which Mr. Harris urged his treaty, after promising to concede it, and on more than one occasion actually naming the day it should be signed, the Taikoon

and council suddenly broke off negotiations, and in the spring of 1858 intimated that the representatives of Holland and America might return to their respective posts. Mr. Harris, however, had succeeded in thoroughly ingratiating himself in the good graces of the Taikoon and court. His departure was marked by every act of sympathy and respect; and when on his return to Simoda the worthy American was struck down by sickness, occasioned partly by disappointment and anxiety, the Taikoon generously sent two Japanese medical men of his staff to attend upon him, and despotically desired them to cure Mr. Harris, or perform upon themselves the operation of disembowelment —an alternative usually attending all failures in Japan. Mr. Harris was soon restored to health, and wondering how the subject of the American treaty could be re-opened, when, as I have told, the Powhattan arrived, the news that the Emperor Hienfung had yielded came in the very nick of time, and the Taikoon followed suit.

All this was cheering intelligence for Lord Elgin; it was evident that the official intellect of Japan was just then in that happy condition to which all Eastern ones have to be brought before Western arguments have much weight: a funk, as the Eton boys say, had been established by our friends the Dutch and Americans, and it only remained for us to keep it up, until we obtained the same privileges for Great Britain as they had secured for themselves. Mr. Harris, in the most generous manner, gave every assistance and information, and placed at our ambassador's disposal

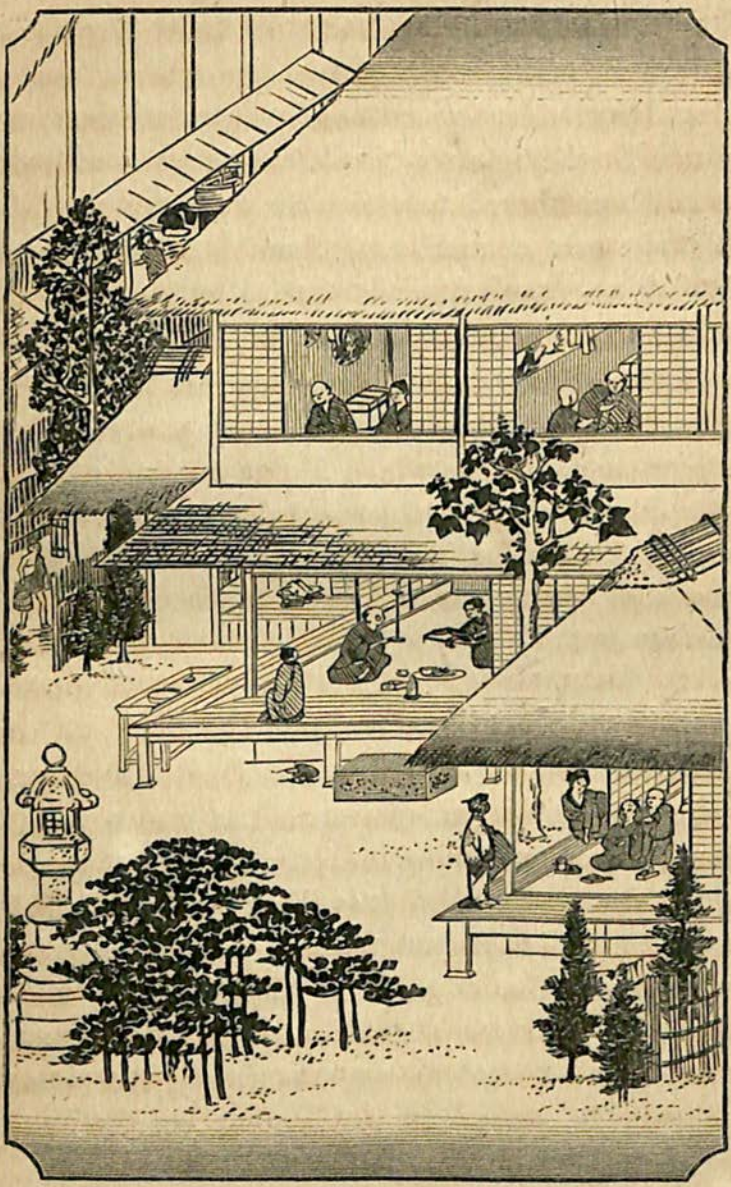
his secretary, Mr. Hewskin, whose knowledge of the Japanese language rendered him invaluable. We need not dwell upon the circumstances under which the escorting squadron and my stout old frigate eventually reached within gunshot of Yedo—the first foreign keels that ever reached within eyesight of the three million Japanese inhabiting that vast city: that I have already told in another work.

Lord Elgin sent on shore by the first interpreter that visited the Furious to announce his arrival, coupling his object to obtain a treaty with the presentation of a yacht as an acknowledgment of past courtesies. Commissioners shortly afterwards waited on the ambassador, and made no serious objection to his temporary residence on shore in Yedo, though it required some skilful fence to induce them to submit willingly to the presence of the British men-of-war. At last they ceased to press the point of the ships going back to Kanagawa, and the Taikoon and council appear from that time to have devoted themselves to see how quickly they could conclude a treaty, receive their present the yacht, and be rid of their unexpected visitors, at the same time exhibiting the profoundest respect and good-will towards our ambassador. At an early stage in the proceedings the Japanese commissioners succeeded in impressing the ambassador with a high opinion of the intelligence and amiability of the people with whom he had to deal,—an opinion more than verified by the tenor of their conduct throughout the brief but earnest negotiations which ensued. It was well, however, for the success of

the English treaty with Japan that our men-of-war had been able to appear within sight of the city of Yedo, for, within the short interval between the signature of the American treaty and Lord Elgin's arrival, the enlightened prince of Bitsu had been forced to retire by a reactionary influence in the Taikoon's council, and three high personages now constituted a commission for the management of foreign affairs, the senior commissioner being the prince of Bongo.* This prince of Bongo, unlike his ancestor the friend of Xavier, was said to represent the ultra-conservative section of the Japanese aristocracy. He was seen once, if not twice, by Lord Elgin; but he did not impress our ambassador as at all a favourable specimen of the intelligence and ability of the upper class.

Whatever may have been the original intentions with which his party came into power, their calculations were utterly confounded by the apparition of two British frigates and a gunboat in their hitherto secluded harbour. Of course it was only moral pressure, but never mind; they had sense enough to appreciate how rapidly it might assume a material form, and, like rational creatures, they saw but one way of escape from our presence—to give us what they had already given to America. Persons were immediately appointed to treat with our ambassador; and, as an extra precaution, no less than six Japanese officials were ordered

* Our readers will recognise this prince's title as having been held by the hospitable nobleman who, two centuries earlier, had been so kind to Europeans, and who, the Jesuits declare, died a Christian.



A JAPANESE INN OR TEA-HOUSE.

to deal with so astute a diplomatist as Lord Elgin; whilst two were considered sufficient for Mr. Harris, and three for Count Pontiatine,—a measure which savoured of distrust, although they cleverly explained it away with a neat compliment upon our ambassador's well-known skill and talents, and their comparatively humble capacities. Lord Elgin gives so excellent and concise an account of the negotiations, that I will abstract them.

"Our first meeting took place," says his lordship,* "on the 19th of August, when we exchanged powers. I made some objection to theirs, which I put on paper, in order that I might obtain from them a written reply. We met again on the 21st, 22nd, and 23rd, in order to go through the clauses of the treaty. I was much struck by the business-like way in which they did their work, making very shrewd observations, and putting pertinent questions, but by no means in a captious or cavilling spirit. Of course their criticisms were sometimes the result of imperfect acquaintance with foreign affairs, and it was occasionally unnecessary to remove their scruples by alterations in the text which were not improvements; but, on the whole, I am bound to say that I never treated with persons who seemed to me, within the limits of their knowledge, to be more reasonable. At the close of the conference of the 23rd, we had agreed on all the clauses of the treaty, and arranged that it should be signed in duplication on the 26th of

* See Blue Book of Lord Elgin's Embassy to China and Japan.

August." Thus it may be said that in four conferences the treaty of Yedo was discussed and agreed to,—a rapidity of negotiation easily accounted for by the anxiety of the reactionary party to get rid of the presence of our ships.

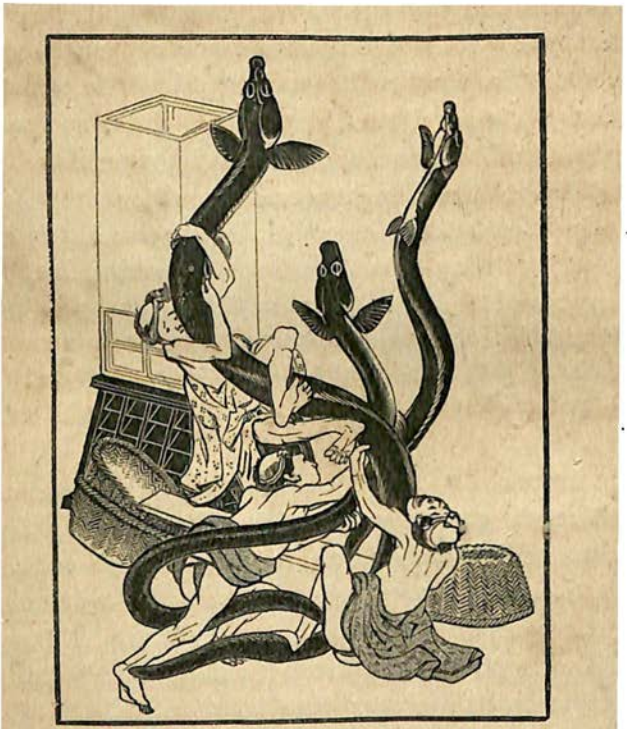
The American treaty, negotiated by Mr. Harris, was naturally accepted as the basis of the English one. Had Lord Elgin attempted to act otherwise, he would assuredly have aroused all the jealousy of the Japanese government, and brought about a rupture. Our ambassador, however, succeeded in introducing two important clauses which were matters of indifference to the Americans. Mr. Harris had agreed to all imports of cotton and woollen manufacture into Japan being taxed with a twenty per cent. duty. This heavy tax Lord Elgin induced them to reduce to five per cent. on all British manufactures. In the next place the revision of the American treaty, or rather its tariff, was to take place at the end of five years, provided the Japanese government would agree to do so. In the English treaty, this right depends as much upon the will of our government as of theirs; either party may call for it at the expiration of that period. A most wise precaution, whilst we are so ignorant of the staples of Japan, or of her wants from Britain and her colonies.

The opening of trade and commencement of political relations with Japan, at one and the same time, was, to say the least of it, a hazardous measure with a nation which had been so long excluded from foreign intercourse, and that had such good cause to look back with jealousy to former relations with Christendom; but it could not be helped. America had taken

the initiative; it would never have done for our merchants to have been in a less favourable position than those of the United States, and the responsibility of precipitancy must rest with her, not with Great Britain. Within a month of the news reaching Shanghai, vessels were sailing for Japan, and returning with Japanese gold and copper. A feverish eagerness to be the first in the field seized the communities of Europeans in all the Chinese sea-ports, and we have already seen how the abuses of the Japanese laws—abuses which led to the slaughter and expulsion of Portuguese citizens—have again been repeated, and there is little doubt but that for the opportune and sudden arrival last year of twelve Russian ships-of-war in Yedo Bay, the hostility awakened by the proceedings of our traders to Japan would have led to a general slaughter of our people in Kanagawa and Hakodadi, with a return to the old exclusive policy.

Let America and England look to this: we have compelled this Eastern government to risk destruction by throwing open the millions they govern to the influences of European civilisation and ideas. Do not let dishonest men embroil us with these people. Every one must rejoice at the prospect of so interesting a land, so charming a race, being better known and appreciated. Every intelligent inhabitant of Great Britain must appreciate the admirable position of the Japanese empire, geographically and politically speaking, with reference to the development of a future vast trade between America and Asia; but, for all that, we do not desire

to see the forty millions of human beings now contentedly living in Japan sacrificed to the keen money-making of some unworthy merchants, or the indiscreet zeal of missionaries, whether of Rome or London.



BOYS STRUGGLING WITH LIVE EELS.

Two centuries ago the Japanese, as I have told, voluntarily held out the hand of good-fellowship to Christendom: they

met with robbery, insult, and treachery. They had then the courage and energy to thrust out the disturbers of their peace. We have now compelled them to receive us by our importunities. We think we are right in trying the experiment; but rather than see them plundered and insulted, we say God send that, if evil is persisted in, the Taikoon and Mikado may have the wisdom to again shut the portals of Japan, firmly and peaceably, before our governments are embroiled, and before any question of Imperial revenue compels us to consult necessity before justice.

THE END.

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